SOVIET AND POST-SOVIET POLITICS AND SOCIETY
Edited by Dr. Andreas Umland

Marlène Laruelle (ed.)

Russian Nationalism, Foreign Policy, and Identity Debates in Putin's Russia

New Ideological Patterns after the Orange Revolution

ibidem

Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society (SPPS)

ISSN 1614-3515

General Editor: Andreas Umland,
Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, umland@stanfordalumni.org

Editorial Assistant: Olena Sivuda, *Drahomanov Pedagogical University of Kyiv,* SLS6255@ku-eichstaett.de

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE*

DOMESTIC & COMPARATIVE POLITICS
Prof. **Ellen Bos**, *Andrássy University of Budapest*
Dr. **Ingmar Bredies**, *FH Bund, Brühl*
Dr. **Andrey Kazantsev**, *MGIMO (U) MID RF, Moscow*
Dr. **Heiko Pleines**, *University of Bremen*
Prof. **Richard Sakwa**, *University of Kent at Canterbury*
Dr. **Sarah Whitmore**, *Oxford Brookes University*
Dr. **Harald Wydra**, *University of Cambridge*
SOCIETY, CLASS & ETHNICITY
Col. **David Glantz**, *"Journal of Slavic Military Studies"*
Dr. **Marlène Laruelle**, *George Washington University*
Dr. **Stephen Shulman**, *Southern Illinois University*
Prof. **Stefan Troebst**, *University of Leipzig*
POLITICAL ECONOMY & PUBLIC POLICY
Prof. em. **Marshall Goldman**, *Wellesley College, Mass.*
Dr. **Andreas Goldthau**, *Central European University*
Dr. **Robert Kravchuk**, *University of North Carolina*
Dr. **David Lane**, *University of Cambridge*
Dr. **Carol Leonard**, *University of Oxford*
Dr. **Maria Popova**, *McGill University, Montreal*

FOREIGN POLICY & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
Dr. **Peter Duncan**, *University College London*
Dr. **Taras Kuzio**, *Johns Hopkins University*
Prof. **Gerhard Mangott**, *University of Innsbruck*
Dr. **Diana Schmidt-Pfister**, *University of Konstanz*
Dr. **Lisbeth Tarlow**, *Harvard University, Cambridge*
Dr. **Christian Wipperfürth**, *N-Ost Network, Berlin*
Dr. **William Zimmerman**, *University of Michigan*
HISTORY, CULTURE & THOUGHT
Dr. **Catherine Andreyev**, *University of Oxford*
Prof. **Mark Bassin**, *Södertörn University*
Prof. **Karsten Brüggemann**, *Tallinn University*
Dr. **Alexander Etkind**, *University of Cambridge*
Dr. **Gasan Gusejnov**, *Moscow State University*
Prof. em. **Walter Laqueur**, *Georgetown University*
Prof. **Leonid Luks**, *Catholic University of Eichstaett*
Dr. **Olga Malinova**, *Russian Academy of Sciences*
Dr. **Andrei Rogatchevski**, *University of Glasgow*
Dr. **Mark Tauger**, *West Virginia University*
Dr. **Stefan Wiederkehr**, *BBAW, Berlin*

ADVISORY BOARD*

Prof. **Dominique Arel**, *University of Ottawa*
Prof. **Jörg Baberowski**, *Humboldt University of Berlin*
Prof. **Margarita Balmaceda**, *Seton Hall University*
Dr. **John Barber**, *University of Cambridge*
Prof. **Timm Beichelt**, *European University Viadrina*
Dr. **Katrin Boeckh**, *University of Munich*
Prof. em. **Archie Brown**, *University of Oxford*
Dr. **Vyacheslav Bryukhovetsky**, *Kyiv-Mohyla Academy*
Prof. **Timothy Colton**, *Harvard University, Cambridge*
Prof. **Paul D'Anieri**, *University of Florida*
Dr. **Heike Dörrenbächer**, *DGO, Berlin*
Dr. **John Dunlop**, *Hoover Institution, Stanford, California*
Dr. **Sabine Fischer**, *SWP, Berlin*
Dr. **Geir Flikke**, *NUPI, Oslo*
Prof. **David Galbreath**, *University of Aberdeen*
Prof. **Alexander Galkin**, *Russian Academy of Sciences*
Prof. **Frank Golczewski**, *University of Hamburg*
Dr. **Nikolas Gvosdev**, *Naval War College, Newport, RI*
Prof. **Mark von Hagen**, *Arizona State University*
Dr. **Guido Hausmann**, *University of Freiburg i.Br.*
Prof. **Dale Herspring**, *Kansas State University*
Dr. **Stefani Hoffman**, *Hebrew University of Jerusalem*
Prof. **Mikhail Ilyin**, *MGIMO (U) MID RF, Moscow*
Prof. **Vladimir Kantor**, *Higher School of Economics*
Dr. **Ivan Katchanovski**, *University of Ottawa*
Prof. em. **Andrzej Korbonski**, *University of California*
Dr. **Iris Kempe**, *"Caucasus Analytical Digest"*
Prof. **Herbert Küpper**, *Institut für Ostrecht Regensburg*
Dr. **Rainer Lindner**, *CEEER, Berlin*
Dr. **Vladimir Malakhov**, *Russian Academy of Sciences*
Dr. **Luke March**, *University of Edinburgh*
Prof. **Michael McFaul**, *US Embassy at Moscow*
Prof. **Birgit Menzel**, *University of Mainz-Germersheim*
Prof. **Valery Mikhailenko**, *The Urals State University*
Prof. **Emil Pain**, *Higher School of Economics, Moscow*
Dr. **Oleg Podvintsev**, *Russian Academy of Sciences*
Prof. **Olga Popova**, *St. Petersburg State University*
Dr. **Alex Pravda**, *University of Oxford*
Dr. **Erik van Ree**, *University of Amsterdam*
Dr. **Joachim Rogall**, *Robert Bosch Foundation Stuttgart*
Prof. **Peter Rutland**, *Wesleyan University, Middletown*
Prof. **Marat Salikov**, *The Urals State Law Academy*
Dr. **Gwendolyn Sasse**, *University of Oxford*
Prof. **Jutta Scherrer**, *EHESS, Paris*
Prof. **Robert Service**, *University of Oxford*
Mr. **James Sherr**, *RIIA Chatham House London*
Dr. **Oxana Shevel**, *Tufts University, Medford*
Prof. **Eberhard Schneider**, *University of Siegen*
Prof. **Olexander Shnyrkov**, *Shevchenko University, Kyiv*
Prof. **Hans-Henning Schröder**, *SWP, Berlin*
Prof. **Yuri Shapoval**, *Ukrainian Academy of Sciences*
Prof. **Viktor Shnirelman**, *Russian Academy of Sciences*
Dr. **Lisa Sundstrom**, *University of British Columbia*
Dr. **Philip Walters**, *"Religion, State and Society", Oxford*
Prof. **Zenon Wasyliw**, *Ithaca College, New York State*
Dr. **Lucan Way**, *University of Toronto*
Dr. **Markus Wehner**, *"Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung"*
Dr. **Andrew Wilson**, *University College London*
Prof. **Jan Zielonka**, *University of Oxford*
Prof. **Andrei Zorin**, *University of Oxford*

* While the Editorial Committee and Advisory Board support the General Editor in the choice and improvement of manuscripts for publication, responsibility for remaining errors and misinterpretations in the series' volumes lies with the books' authors.

Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society (SPPS)

ISSN 1614-3515

Founded in 2004 and refereed since 2007, SPPS makes available affordable English-, German-, and Russian-language studies on the history of the countries of the former Soviet bloc from the late Tsarist period to today. It publishes between 5 and 20 volumes per year and focuses on issues in transitions to and from democracy such as economic crisis, identity formation, civil society development, and constitutional reform in CEE and the NIS. SPPS also aims to highlight so far understudied themes in East European studies such as right-wing radicalism, religious life, higher education, or human rights protection. The authors and titles of all previously published volumes are listed at the end of this book. For a full description of the series and reviews of its books, see

www.ibidem-verlag.de/red/spps.

Editorial correspondence & manuscripts should be sent to: Dr. Andreas Umland, DAAD, German Embassy, vul. Bohdana Khmelnitskoho 25, UA-01901 Kyiv, Ukraine. e-mail: umland@stanfordalumni.org

Business correspondence & review copy requests should be sent to: ***ibidem*** Press, Leuschnerstr. 40, 30457 Hannover, Germany; tel.: +49 511 2622200; fax: +49 511 2622201; spps@ibidem.eu.

Authors, reviewers, referees, and editors for (as well as all other persons sympathetic to) SPPS are invited to join its networks at

www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=52638198614
www.linkedin.com/groups?about=&gid=103012
www.xing.com/net/spps-ibidem-verlag/

Recent Volumes

114 Ivo Mijnssen
The Quest for an Ideal Youth in Putin's Russia I
Back to Our Future! History, Modernity and Patriotism according to *Nashi,* 2005-2012
With a foreword by Jeronim Perović
ISBN 978-3-8382-0368-3

115 Jussi Lassila
The Quest for an Ideal Youth in Putin's Russia II
The Search for Distinctive Conformism in the Political Communication of *Nashi,* 2005-2009
With a foreword by Kirill Postoutenko
ISBN 978-3-8382-0415-4

116 Valerio Trabandt
Neue Nachbarn, gute Nachbarschaft?
Die EU als internationaler Akteur am Beispiel ihrer Demokratieförderung in Belarus und der Ukraine 2004-2009
Mit einem Vorwort von Jutta Joachim
ISBN 978-3-8382-0437-6

117 Fabian Pfeiffer
Estlands Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik I
Der estnische Atlantizismus nach der wiedererlangten Unabhängigkeit 1991-2004
Mit einem Vorwort von Helmut Hubel
ISBN 978-3-8382-0127-6

118 Jana Podßuweit
Estlands Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik II
Handlungsoptionen eines Kleinstaates im Rahmen seiner EU-Mitgliedschaft (2004-2008)
Mit einem Vorwort von Helmut Hubel
ISBN 978-3-8382-0440-6

119 Karin Pointner
Estlands Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik III
Eine gedächtnispolitische Analyse estnischer Entwicklungskooperation 2006-2010
Mit einem Vorwort von Karin Liebhart
ISBN 978-3-8382-0435-2

120 Ruslana Vovk
Die Offenheit der ukrainischen Verfassung für das Völkerrecht und die europäische Integration
Mit einem Vorwort von Alexander Blankenagel
ISBN 978-3-8382-0481-9

121 Mykhaylo Banakh
Die Relevanz der Zivilgesellschaft bei den postkommunistischen Transformationsprozessen in mittel- und osteuropäischen Ländern
Das Beispiel der spät- und postsowjetischen Ukraine 1986-2009
Mit einem Vorwort von Gerhard Simon
ISBN 978-3-8382-0499-4

Marlène Laruelle (ed.)

RUSSIAN NATIONALISM, FOREIGN POLICY, AND IDENTITY DEBATES IN PUTIN'S RUSSIA

New Ideological Patterns after the Orange Revolution

ibidem-Verlag
Stuttgart

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at http://dnb.d-nb.de.

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über http://dnb.d-nb.de abrufbar.

The contributions in this book were originally published in © *Demokratizatsiya* 19, no. 3, Summer 2011. They are reprinted here with kind permission by the editors and Heldref.

Formatting assistance: Olena Sivuda

Frontcover Picture: Demonstrations in Moscow, November 4, 2007. © Marlène Laruelle

ISSN: 1614-3515

ISBN-13: 978-3-8382-6325-0

© ***ibidem***-Verlag / ***ibidem*** Press
Stuttgart, Germany 2014

Alle Rechte vorbehalten

Das Werk einschließlich aller seiner Teile ist urheberrechtlich geschützt. Jede Verwertung außerhalb der engen Grenzen des Urheberrechtsgesetzes ist ohne Zustimmung des Verlages unzulässig und strafbar. Dies gilt insbesondere für Vervielfältigungen, Übersetzungen, Mikroverfilmungen und elektronische Speicherformen sowie die Einspeicherung und Verarbeitung in elektronischen Systemen.

All rights reserved

No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form,
or by any means (electronical, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise)
without the prior written permission of the publisher.
Any person who does any unauthorized act in relation to this publication may be liable to
criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

Contents

Introduction

Marlène Laruelle, *George Washington University* 7

1 Is Nationalism Rising in Russian Foreign Policy? The Case of Georgia

Luke March, University of Edinburgh 11

2 History, Memory and National Identity: Understanding the Politics of History and Memory Wars in Post-Soviet Lands

Igor Torbakov, Uppsala Center for Russian Studies 41

3 Negotiating History: Memory Wars in the Near Abroad and the Pro-Kremlin Youth Movements

Marlène Laruelle, George Washington University 75

4 Making Sense of Nashi's Political Style: The Bronze Soldier and the Counter-Orange Community

Jussi Lassila, Aleksanteri Institute 105

5 Russian Radical Nationalist Interpretation of the French Riots of November 2005

Lukasz Jurczyszyn, Pultusk Academy of Humanities 139

Introduction

Marlène Laruelle, George Washington University, USA

Works devoted to nationalism in contemporary Russia often tend to dissociate the radical, extremist movements—whether it is a matter of small, neo-fascist parties or youth sub-cultures such as the skinheads—from the more official movements within the country's ruling bodies, and which manipulate the theme of the nation for diverse aims. In Russia itself, both the media and researchers have a tendency to dissociate expressions of *nationalism,* considered as destructive of the social fabric and as being often violent, from those of *patriotism,* which, by contrast, is perceived as a healthy and constructive movement—indeed, on the back of significant support from public opinion, it is a movement that the Kremlin has again made fashionable. However, despite the existing diversity of agendas and methods of action, these differing statements on the nation can be said to share many overlapping spaces, or even a continuum. This is so much the case that issues related to national identity have become central for the creation of a civic consensus.

The so-called nationalist movements, the Russian authorities, and public opinion have sometimes very contradictory visions of the country's future, but their points of view join up on a series of themes. Two types of topics fall under this consensual category. The first one is xenophobia against migrants, although the degree of radicalism varies widely, as do the strategies proposed to fight it (which range from state programs for teaching "tolerance" to calls by radical groups to expel "foreigners"). The second domain of consensuality bears on the interpretation of evolutions in the Near Abroad. Here, too, in spite of differences in nuance, the same interpretative grid is deployed in the Kremlin's narratives, surveys of public opinion, and nationalist movements. Nationalism is, above all, an instrument geared for the Russian domestic scene. The Kremlin's promotion of its very statist patriotism is de-

signed to respond to a social demand from "below" as well as to prevent nationalist sentiment from becoming a driver of possible opposition to United Russia. The media-cultivated mainstream points up cultural components connected with Russian history and reprises for its own ends Soviet mottos and pathos, such as those concerning ethnic tolerance and the unity of Eurasian peoples. There are numerous projects for political mobilization that are based on the notion that multiple potential enemies, both internal and external ones, put the nation in "danger," but not all are successful.

Contrary to what is often supposed, however, "Russian nationalism" does not play a structural role in Russia's foreign policy: grounded in existing legal frameworks, Moscow's decisions at the international level are much more nuanced than those endorsed by nationalist groups. Indeed few so-called nationalist figures occupy positions in institutions connected with foreign policy. The exception here is Dmitri Rogozin, though Putin has managed to marginalize him from domestic politics by appointing him as Russia's NATO representative. Over recent years mechanisms have been developed to promote Russia abroad, and a new space of meeting has been created between the *statist* logics pertaining to foreign affairs and those of groups or major figures sensitive to the future of the Russian *nation*. These logics underscore Moscow's underestimation of questions of nation-branding, its need to invest in the "information war," and its need to rally Russian-speaking communities throughout the world.

Moreover, in the domestic sphere, themes connected with the Near Abroad engender – near total – unanimity: one of the most striking examples is the war with Georgia in August 2008. Such unanimity also reigns concerning Moscow's criticisms of the Baltic States, its opinion of the Ukrainian political elite, and that of the situation in Moldavia whenever the future of Transnistria is at stake. Consensus also prevails through a vague, but historically anchored, resentment toward "the West," whether at issue is Europe or the United States, both of which are suspected of not appreciating Russia's real worth and of applying double-standards in their policies toward it. The only event of the "Far Abroad" that received a uniform interpretation in Russia was the riots in the French suburbs in 2005: the authorities, public opinion, and nationalist groups, not to mention very many Russian intellectuals, viewed

these riots as a fight conducted by “Arabs” against the “French.” A mirror of their own domestic phobias over the migration issue, this gave birth to multiple narratives about the “disappearance of European ethnic identity,” and about the need for Russia to avoid this path.

The five chapters gathered in this work discuss the new conjunctions that have emerged between foreign policy events and expressions of “Russian nationalism.” Relations with Georgia, Ukraine, and the Baltic countries, in particular over the memory wars that have developed throughout post-Communist space in recent years, as well as the interpretation of the French riots, have all contributed to reinforcing Russian apprehensions. These apprehensions are shared not only by the organs of the Russian state, and public opinion (which is heavily monitored by official propaganda on these questions), but also by nationalist groups, that is, mainly the youth ones, which include the pro-Kremlin youth as much as the skinheads. All these groups have their own agendas, and employ different methods of action in the public sphere for participating in the social consensus and receiving recognition from other segments of society. But they share a very similar reading of these events. This fact contributes to reinforcing the idea that there is a prevailing unanimity in Russian society, and thus indirectly also to shaping current Russian national identity.

1 Is Nationalism Rising in Russian Foreign Policy? The Case of Georgia[1]

Luke March, University of Edinburgh, Scotland

Western discussion during the last half-decade has increasingly focussed on an "assertive" and even "aggressive" Russian foreign policy that underpins an ever more confident global position. From a Russia that could only say "yes" in the 1990s, the West is apparently now confronting a Russia that can, and will, say "no".[2]

For many analysts, this assertive stance has been associated with distinct ideational underpinnings that have sought to challenge Western liberalism. Although "sovereign democracy" has been the most obvious example, many have also argued that anti-Western nationalism has moved from the margins to the mainstream of Russian discourse in the Putin era.[3] Moreover, this nationalism has, apparently, begun ineluctably to influence Russian foreign policy and to deepen the rhetorical and cognitive dissonance between Russia and the West. Indeed, as Edward Lucas argued, "the ideological conflict of the New Cold War is between lawless Russian nationalism and law-governed Western multilateralism."[4]

1 I wish to acknowledge the support of the British Academy (Overseas Conference Grant) in this research.

2 Walter D. Connor, "A Russia that Can Say 'No'?," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 40, no. 3 (September 2007): 383-391.

3 Hyung-min Joo, "The Soviet Origin of Russian Chauvinism: Voices from Below," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 41, no. 2 (June 2008): 217-242; Andreas Umland, "Rastsvet russkogo ul'tranatsionalizma i s tanovlenie soobshchestva ego issledovatelei," *Forum noveishei vostochnoevropeiskoi istorii i kul'tury* 6, no. 1 (2009): 5-38; and George W. Breslauer, "Observations on Russia's Foreign Relations under Putin," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 25, no. 4 (2009).

4 Edward Lucas, *The New Cold War: How the Kremlin Menaces Both Russia and the West* (Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2009), 14.

However, the role nationalism might have played in the Russia-Georgia War of August 2008 has been largely ignored. One of the most influential authors on the conflict, Ronald Asmus, did argue that "by the summer of 2008 … an increasingly nationalistic and revisionist Russia was … rebelling against a system that it felt no longer met its interests and had been imposed on it during a moment of temporary weakness."[5] Yet neither he nor other authors examined this claim in depth. Yet his contention can support a narrative of "lawless Russian nationalism." Russia's recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in defiance of Euro-Atlantic positions can be seen as the tipping-point when Russia began to substantiate its rhetoric and to export highly nationalistic internal values in an attempt to revise the post-Cold War order.

Nevertheless, hindsight perhaps confounds this view. Although the Western consensus is that Russia wanted and planned the war, Western and Georgian mistakes mean that a narrative of "good" West versus "evil" Russia (implicit in Lucas's account) cannot be convincingly maintained.[6] More widely, the US-Russia "reset" has involved a marked change of climate and de-escalation of rhetoric. Russia itself has focussed increasingly on internal modernization and the immediate fear that it was to pursue overt annexation of other contested regions like Crimea and Transnistria has receded. Finally, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's modernization rhetoric is associated with increased efforts to control domestic nationalist excesses via greater law enforcement.[7]

In this article, I will trace the foreign policy influence of Russian nationalism from the Putin to the Medvedev eras, focussing specifically on Russian nationalist arguments for and reactions to the August 2008 conflict. The main questions in focus are: (1) What are the basic dynamics of the relationship between nationalism and foreign policy under Putin and Medvedev?; (2) What

5 Ronald Asmus, *A Little War that Shook the World: Georgia, Russia, and the Future of the West*, 1st ed. (Houndmills, England: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 7.

6 Some of the most detailed and nuanced accounts are contained in Svante E. Cornell and S. Frederick Starr, *The Guns of August 2008: Russia's War in Georgia* (Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2009).

7 Galina Kozhevnikova, "Manifestations of Radical Nationalism and Efforts to Counteract it in Russia during the First Half of 2010," SOVA Center, July 30, 2010, available at http://www.sova-center.ru/en/xenophobia/reports-analyses/2010/07/d19436/ (accessed May 23, 2011).

role did Russian nationalism play in the Russia-Georgia War? Was it a significant factor in Russian motivations before and after the conflict as Asmus indicated?; and, (3) Overall, was the role of Russian nationalism in the war a corroboration of or a deviation from this general relationship? I will end with some observations about whether the influence of nationalism on Russian foreign policy has indeed decreased since 2008 and whether Russian nationalism presents a significant obstacle to the "modernization" and "resetting" of Russian policy.

I will argue that the typical relationship between Russian nationalism and foreign policy is a complex one–it is simply not the case that Russian nationalism is inherently expansionist and militarist, as some classic accounts argue.[8] Even under Putin and Medvedev, the authorities have generally promoted a foreign policy based on "statist nationalism" that is conservative as opposed to reactionary, and that is orientated towards pragmatism, not ideology. In the foreign policy realm, the authorities traditionally attempt to insulate themselves from constrictive ideational factors in general, including more aggressive forms of nationalism. Nevertheless, they have simultaneously stoked more aggressive ethno-nationalist sentiment ("civilizational nationalism") in the domestic sphere for legitimacy and mobilization purposes—sometimes inadvertently, but often quite deliberately, in ways that conflict with their declared foreign policy goals. The typical relationship is, then, not of nationalism motivating or "driving" foreign policy, but of the elites exploiting nationalism for domestic purposes.

However, the Russia-Georgia War was a marked deviation from this pattern. Civilizational nationalism did directly matter in foreign policy, because foreign policy and domestic discourse became blended to an unprecedented degree, and the terms of debate were largely set by the civilizationists. This was not a sudden phenomenon; in the Putin era, the domestic mobilization of civilizational nationalism increased so that it became the "politically correct" domestic discourse. Yet the Georgian case is one which shows an unprecedented spill-over from the domestic to the foreign policy realms—the long build-up to the 2008 war showed a gradual commingling of Russian official and civiliza-

8 Richard Pipes, *Survival Is Not Enough: Soviet Realities and America's Future* (Simon & Schuster, 1984).

tionist attitudes that created a self-fulfilling prophecy. From the Russian perspective, Georgia was the hostile, nationalist "aggressor" against whom measures had to be taken. Moreover, the conflict also showed that for the first time, civilizational nationalism was directly influencing Russian foreign policy, even at the level of doctrine. Since 2009, there has been a partial return to the norm; the Russian elite seems aware of the dangers of aggressive nationalism escaping its control and has sought to return to non-ideational, non-nationalist rhetoric. However, without more fundamental domestic change, this is likely to remain a superficial "reset" that does not circumvent the likelihood of nationalism increasingly affecting Russian foreign policy.

Nationalism and Foreign Policy: From "Managed" to Unmanageable?

Observers fundamentally disagree about the role of nationalism in Russian foreign policy. This is unsurprising. As John Breuilly argues, there is a significant conceptual problem with identifying state nationalism: "nationalist" governments whose policies defend "national interests" and which other states might regard as "assertive" or "aggressive" are so universal that "governmental nationalism" can become a meaningless category unless there is an obvious, direct link between government and a nationalist movement.[9] In Russia, no such link exists.

Nevertheless, three broad approaches to Russian state nationalism can be identified. Liberal views tend to assume that domestic ideas and constituencies are determining in general and nationalism has become more relevant (and dangerous) in particular. For example, analysts have traced the influence of anti-Western neo-Eurasianists like Aleksandr Dugin and Mikhail Leont'ev over the political establishment—in particular the number of leading Russian executive and legislative figures in Dugin's International Eurasian Movement (including Presidential aide Aslanbek Aslakhanov and South Ossetian President Eduard Kokoity.[10] For some, indeed, Putin has himself been

9 John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, 2nd ed. (Manchester University Press, 1993):10-11

10 Yigal Liverant, "The Prophet of the New Russian Empire," *Azure* 35 (2009), available at http://www.azure.org.il/include/print.php?id=483 (accessed June 6, 2011); and

heavily influenced by neo-Eurasianist ideas.[11] For many, increasing domestic authoritarianism promotes anti-Western nationalism in foreign policy.[12] For them, Russian foreign policy has become increasingly driven by its domestic imperatives. Most notably, the Kremlin doctrine of "sovereign democracy" was motivated primarily by the need to defend against regional "coloured revolutions" and allegedly marked a fundamental existential challenge to the West.[13]

In contrast, many (primarily, but not exclusively, realists) argue that even under Putin Russia remains a predominantly pragmatic, non-ideological state motivated largely by traditional high-level security concerns, material interests and economic opportunism—this is the Russia Inc. outlined by Dmitri Trenin.[14] The highly consolidated elite can conduct foreign policy independently of domestic interest when necessary, as in Putin's notorious pro-Western shift after September 11, 2001. Of course, the Russian foreign policy elite themselves largely share this realist view, seeing their policy as one of pragmatic and rational national interests based around *raison'd'état.*

Arguably more persuasive are broadly constructivist accounts that do not assume *a priori* that external or internal factors are dominant, but argue that they are dialectical and mediated subjectively via the policy process.[15] For

---

Umland, "Rastsvet russkogo ul'tranatsionalizma i s tanovlenie soobshchestva ego issledovatelei."

11 Liverant, "The Prophet of the New Russian Empire."

12 E.g. James Sherr, "The Implication of the Russia-Georgia War for European Security," in *The Guns of August 2008: Russia's War in Georgia*, ed. Svante E. Cornell and S. Frederick Starr (Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2009): 196-224; Pierre Hassner, "Russia's Transition to Autocracy," *Journal of Democracy* 19, no. 2 (2008): 5-15; and Lilia Shevtsova, "The Return of Personalized Power," *Journal of Democracy* 20, no. 2 (2009): 61-65.

13 Ivan Krastev, "Russia as the 'Other Europe,'" *Russia in Global Affairs*, November 17, 2007, available at http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/n_9779.

14 E.g. Dmitri Trenin, *Getting Russia Right* (Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2007); Robert H. Donaldson and Joseph L. Nogee, *The Foreign Policy of Russia: Changing Systems, Enduring Interests*, 4th ed. (Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2009); Jeffrey Mankoff, *Russian Foreign Policy: The Return of Great Power Politics* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Books, Rowman & Littlefield, 2009); Elana Wilson Rowe and Stina Torjesen, *The Multilateral Dimension in Russian Foreign Policy*, 1st edition (New York: Routledge, 2008).

15 E.g. Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 and 1999* (Cornell University Press, 2002); Andrei P. Tsygankov, *Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity*, Revised edition (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010); Robert Jackson

instance, externally-projected "national interests" are themselves always subjectively defined through the prism of domestic nationalism–a state can only agree such interests if national identity itself is defined.

Focussing on the domestic-foreign policy nexus reveals certain long-term trends. For example, Astrid Tuminez argues that the Russian Imperial and Soviet foreign policy traditions shared a desire to prioritize interests of state over nation and to insulate foreign policymaking from aggressive nationalism.[16] Such nationalism was regarded as useful for domestic consolidation, but seen as constricting and even dangerous when exported into the foreign policy realm. When nationalism did affect foreign policy more directly, this was usually in conditions of international and national crisis and profound elite divisions; it was more generally used simply to reinforce traditional views of Russia as a "great power".[17] Such a tradition continued into the post-Soviet era. For instance, it is generally understood that the 1990s ushered in unprecedented competition between three broad schools of foreign policy (usually known as Westernizers, Statists/Pragmatic nationalists and Hard-Line Nationalists/Civilizationists), as outlined in Table 1. In the 1990s, the civilizationists were the most publicly vocal. However, the elite gave them only rhetorical concessions (e.g. forming the Russian-Belarusian Union) and generally regarded their policies as geopolitically confrontational and economically counterproductive, at least when relations with the West were good.[18]

---

and Georg Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches*, 4th edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); and Neil Malcolm et al., *Internal Factors in Russian Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

16 Astrid S Tuminez, *Russian Nationalism Since 1856: Ideology and the Making of Foreign Policy* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000).

17 *Ibid.*

18 Andrei Tsygankov, "From Belgrade to Kiev. Hard-line nationalism and Russia's foreign policy," in *Russian Nationalism and the National Reassertion of Russia*, ed. Marlène Laruelle (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), 189-202.

Table 1. Russian nationalist views of foreign policy

VARIABLE	*Westernizers*	*Statists*	*Civilizationists*
Concept of "nation"	Civic: Russia as liberal democratic, constitutional, multiethnic (Rossiiskoe) state	Statist/Civic: Russia as illiberal, constitutional, multiethnic (Rossiiskoe) state	Ethnic: Russia as unique civilization based on culture and values of ethnic Russians (Russkie)
Foreign policy objectives	Integration with West	Sovereignty; Great power status	Empire; cultural independence
Foreign policy methods	Alliances with West	Flexible alliances	Alliances against West (Clash of civilizations)
Relative strength in 2000s	Weak	Strong	Weak but increasing

Source: Author's conceptualization, developed from Tsygankov, 'From Belgrade to Kiev' and "Russia in the Post-Western World."

Since Putin came to power, the statists have been dominant in domestic and foreign policy making. However, their precise relationship to other nationalist views is ambiguous. This is barely surprising, since, as Oxana Shevel notes, every distinct discourse of nationhood in post-Soviet Russia has conceptual and practical ambiguities and contradictions that both reflect and reinforce Russia's unfinished nation-building.[19] On one hand, at an ideological level, the statists are barely "nationalists" at all – they rarely talk about "nation", and their central concepts are statehood (*gosudarstvennost'*) and great power status (*derzhavnost'*). The statists appear to be archetypal conservatives, for whom stability, pragmatism and national tradition are more important than

19 Oxana Shevel, "Russian Nation-building from Yel'tsin to Medvedev: Ethnic, Civic or Purposefully Ambiguous?," *Europe-Asia Studies* 63, no. 2 (2011): 179.

"nation" as an independent ideological construct.[20] When they do talk about the Russian nation, this is generally defined in civic, multiethnic terms – Putin has talked about *Rossiiskaya natsiya* not *Russkaya natsiya* (nation of Russian citizens rather than ethnic Russian nation). In addition, statist politicians like Vladislav Surkov (the author of "sovereign democracy") have spoken harshly against the divisive policies of aggressive nationalists.

On the other hand, the statists' attitudes are proto-nationalistic because of their Soviet heritage. For instance, following Stalin, they are unable to regard their own nationalist inclinations self-critically: "nationalism" is a negative concept reserved for "extremist" anti-state actors while state policies are invariably "patriotic".[21] Moreover, owing to continuities in Tsarist and Marxist-Leninist security traditions, much of elite foreign policy thinking has "still displayed features of…renounced ideology."[22] A persuasive argument sees the elite having less a coherent nationalist ideology than an engrained foreign policy "mindset" or "instinct" derived from a traditionalist *Realpolitik* mentality.[23] This mindset emphases foreign (especially Western) threats, a zero-sum emphasis on geopolitics and "spheres of influence" – overall an illiberalism and naked realism.[24] In addition, since (unlike the W esternizers), statists give scant regard to individual rather than group rights, it is "open to interpretation how Russocentric is the *rossiiskaya* nation".[25] Even when the rhetoric of the statists' foreign policy is not fully nationalistic, its substance is; its pursuit of "great power status" is almost a national mission, and it sees the state itself in quasi-nationalistic emotional and even spiritual terms. Moreover, the often-articulated tone of defiance articulates *ressentiment*, the sense of envy that reinforces particularistic pride and xenophobia as parts of national identity,

20 Joris van Bladel, *The Dual Structure and Mentality of Vladimir Putin's Power Coalition: A Legacy for Medvedev?* (Stockholm: FOI, Swedish Defence Research Agency, 2008).

21 Marlène Laruelle, *In the Name of the Nation: Nationalism and Politics in Contemporary Russia* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

22 Marcel De Haas, *Russia's Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century*, 1st ed. (New York: Routledge, 2010): 7.

23 Dmitri Trenin and Bobo Lo, *The Landscape of Russian Foreign Policy-Decision Making* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment, 2005); Bladel, *The Dual Structure and Mentality of Vladimir Putin's Power Coalition: A Legacy for Medvedev?*.

24 Bobo Lo, *Vladimir Putin and the Evolution of Russian Foreign Policy* (Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell, 2003).

25 Shevel, "Russian Nation-building from Yel'tsin to Medvedev," 183.

which in Russia has been historically directed at the West.[26] As James Sherr has argued, "a feeling of *obida* (injury) at perceived humiliation by the West…became foundations of policy…at least as potent as Soviet ideology had been."[27] Overall, their mindset gives statists more elective affinity to the civilizationists than to the Westernizers and so they are not as equidistant between the two groups as Table 1 might indicate. This affinity potentially allows civilizationist ideas the means to affect foreign policy discourse.

During the Putin era, the potential for civilizationist ideas to influence elite discourse has increased in other ways too. First, the foreign policy making process has become more centralized since the Yeltsin era. This has had ambiguous effects: on the one hand, the Kremlin (in both domestic and foreign policy) is theoretically able to dictate a more unified foreign policy line and ignore civilizational nationalists to a greater degree than it did in the 1990s. On the other hand, the "black box" of the Kremlin is very difficult to observe. Foreign policy making is restricted to a very narrow circle of trusted advisers and the presidential administration.[28] Naturally, this places an emphasis on personal connections, behind-the-scenes lobbying and other indirect forms of influence from which civilizationists might unduly benefit. For instance, it is argued that Aleksandr Dugin's influence is "immense" among the Russian political establishment, while Putin's favoured journalist is Mikhail Leont'ev and his confessor is the nationalist Priest Archimandrite Tikhon Shevkunov.[29] None of this is verifiable (and indeed it is hard to identify consistently neo-Eurasianist ideas in Putin's public pronouncements) but it does indicate how the closed policy process might actually benefit nationalists with high levels of access.

Second, despite this centralization, public discourse is far from irrelevant in policy making. Certainly, the Kremlin is known to be an assiduous analyst of

26 Breslauer, "Observations on Russia's foreign relations under Putin"; Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity*, (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1993).
27 Sherr, "The Implication of the Russia-Georgia War," 205.
28 Alexander Sergunin, "Russia's foreign-policy decision making on Europe," in *Russia's European Choice*, ed. Ted Hopf (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2008), 59-96; Trenin and Lo, *The Landscape of Russian Foreign Policy-Decision Making*; Ol'ga Kryshtanovskaya and Stephen White, "Inside the Putin Court: A Research Note," *Europe-Asia Studies* 57, no. 7 (November 2005): 1065-1075.
29 Liverant, "The Prophet of the New Russian Empire."

public opinion. Indeed, Putin's public image has deliberately co-opted liberal, communist and nationalist ideas to serve his "father of the nation" status.[30] In this way, publicly articulated nationalist ideas can inform Kremlin policy. Indeed, it can be argued that the Kremlin's nationalism is mainly an attempt to co-opt ideas which have a popular resonance in the service of regime goals.[31] So it is not unimportant that the State Duma (which, although it has minimal direct policy influence still plays a large role in affecting political debate) has since 2003 been dominated by parties of a statist or civilizational nationalist inclination. The Duma parties' "opposition" has been much constrained, and indeed these parties rarely dissent from Kremlin foreign policy except in a more nationalist direction, particularly in periods of perceived national existential crisis when they basically act as cheerleaders for the regime.

Third, under Putin, nationalism has played an increasingly important and coordinated function in both Russia's foreign and domestic policy-formation. Just as the Kremlin's approach to politics can be dubbed "managed pluralism" (the elite demarcates the broad boundaries of "healthy" democracy and periodically intervenes to maintain these boundaries), its approach to nationalism is "managed nationalism".[32] As I have explored in greater depth elsewhere, this managed nationalism consists of three interlocking spheres:[33]

1. *Official nationality:* so named because it is functionally equivalent to Tsarist Official Nationality – it is only quasi-nationalist (state interests are prior to the nation's) and aims to co-opting "patriotic" sentiment in the interests of internal and external regime stability. It is reflected in official Kremlin statements, presidential addresses, and foreign policy doctrines that articulate the statist *gosudarstvennik* position: this is a relatively moderate, "European", secular and pragmatic conservatism most cogently articulated in the doctrine of "sovereign democracy": modernization and democratization *à la Russe.*

30 Richard Sakwa, *Putin: Russia's Choice, Second Edition: Russia's Choice*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2009).
31 Marlène Laruelle, *In the Name of the Nation*.
32 Luke March, "Nationalism for Export? The Domestic and Foreign-Policy Implications of the New 'Russian Idea'," *Europe-Asia Studies* (forthcoming 2012); Marlène Laruelle, *In the Name of the Nation*.
33 March, "Nationalism for Export?."

2. *Cultural nationalism* is principally the mainstream intellectual and media discourse and symbols that aim to reinforce the historical, moral and social aspects of a distinct Russian "national" way of life and thereby build a sense of national solidarity.
3. *Political nationalism* is simply domestic electoral and social mobilization around nationalist motifs.

Under Putin, the state has actively shaped the relationship between these three spheres: official nationality sets down the parameters for the cultural and political sphere which are allowed some autonomy within (and even, occasionally, beyond) these limits as long as they do not fundamentally challenge it.

Finally, of most relevance to the Georgia case is that civilizational nationalism is allowed relatively free rein in the cultural and political spheres. This nationalism emphasises the uniqueness of Russian "civilization" and contrasts it against the "other" (increasingly the West or pro-Western governments in Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova).[34] It portrays Russia as a "besieged fortress"; the Russian authorities are the only force preventing national destruction and the population needs to "rally round the flag" against external enemies who are motivated by "Russophobia".[35] Given state control of the electronic media, which largely marginalizes non-loyal and liberal voices, a vicious circle of "civilizational nationalism" is created: the state helps create a media dominated by this nationalism, which then re-informs Kremlin policy. This civilizational nationalism often directly contradicts the pro-European, modernist and pragmatic elements of official nationality, but this contradiction has actually proved beneficial to the Russian elite, since such mechanisms "combine…openness to the West with effective discrediting of all Western voices by means of creating a virtual conflict with the West over a third area."[36] Indeed, the elite has deliberately stoked anti-Westernism to these ends.

34 Marlene Laruelle, ed., *Sovremennye interpretatsii russkogo natsionalizma* [Modern Interpretations of Russian Nationalism] (Stuttgart: ibidem-Verlag, 2007).
35 Valentina Feklyunina, "Russia as a 'Besieged Fortress'," (presented at the ICCEES World Congress, Stockholm, 2010).
36 Mikhail Filippov, "Diversionary Role of the Georgia–Russia Conflict: International Constraints and Domestic Appeal," *Europe-Asia Studies* 61, no. 10 (2009): 1825.

In addition, a large number of interconnected think-tanks emerged during the 2000s that have promulgated the new statist and civilizational nationalism more widely. There is a huge cross-fertilization of personnel and ideas (for instance many of the "nationalist" think tanks overlap with official structures around the dominant pro-presidential party United Russia), meaning that elite and nationalist views are in many cases one and the same, and often marginal nationalist views can come to more public prominence.[37] Although relatively Westernizing think-tanks (such as INSOR, Carnegie or the Center for Political Technologies) still maintain a high profile (especially outside Russia), the proliferation of well-funded nationalist think-tanks and the dominance of nationalist discourse on state-run media means that these have tended to swim against public opinion: pro-Kremlin think-tanks flood the market with nationalist ideas.

From the mid-2000s, this domestic oversupply of civilizational nationalism meant that such ideas were increasingly visible even in official domestic *and* foreign policy. For example, despite the civic and multiethnic elements noted above, the dominant features of Russianness in Kremlin discourse (noted in particular in its strictures against the "falsification of history") have become the "commitment to … Russian culture: language, history, values of statehood and patriotism, the idea of the strong and great Russia, uniqueness of the Russian civilization."[38] Economic growth underpinned an increasing Russian emphasis on "soft" power and attempts to promote Russian history and culture as a pole of attraction to compete with a West perceived to be declining.[39] Accordingly, Russia has used a number of mechanisms to project its values beyond its borders, from the *Russia Today* English-language TV channel, to the Paris and New York based Institute for Democracy and Cooperation and the Russkii Mir foundation headed by Kremlin-connected Vyacheslav Nikonov, which specialises in the promulgation of Russian language

37 Marlène Laruelle, *Inside and around the Kremlin's Black Box: The New Nationalist Think Tanks in Russia* (Stockholm: Institute for Security and Development Policy, 2009).

38 Petr Panov, "Nation-building in post-Soviet Russia: What kind of nationalism is produced by the Kremlin?," *Journal of Eurasian Studies* 1, no. 2 (July 2010): 85-94 at p. 93.

39 Andrei Tsygankov, "Russia in the Post-Western World: The End of the Normalization Paradigm?," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 25, no. 4 (October 1, 2009): 347-369.

and culture beyond Russia's own borders.

Nevertheless, the Kremlin has demonstrated an overall reluctance to use extreme nationalism for sustained social mobilization, and seeks periodically to control it (for instance by demoting the most articulate nationalist politicians like Dmitri Rogozin). Indeed, Boris Kagarlitskii argues that the Kremlin is scared of "dangerous" nationalists like Dugin.[40] However, despite the official preference for enlightened patriotism, the Kremlin actually has few strong safeguards against unenlightened nationalism: the authorities' frequent repudiation of liberal democracy and the extinction of domestic liberalism gives an inbuilt bias towards illiberal versions of nationalism. Moreover, if theorists of nationalism are right, illiberal nationalism is inherent to authoritarian or semi-authoritarian systems, which lack the representative institutions and cultures of compromise that might "digest" nationalism into milder forms. As Michael Mann argues "Mild nationalism…is democracy achieved, aggressive nationalism is democracy perverted."[41]

The ensuing sections will show exactly this. Over time, the infusion of formerly marginal civilizationist sentiments into mainstream Russian thinking in the 2000s began strongly to frame elite thinking towards Georgia. This led to a self-fulfilling prophecy whereby Georgia was repeatedly denigrated as itself an aggressive, nationalistic, weak, untrustworthy and profoundly hostile state and a pawn of nefarious Western geopolitical interests. The Russian elite became predisposed to seeing the worst in Georgian intentions and to preparing accordingly. Ultimately, "liberal" Medvedev took the "aggressive" response of "coercing Georgia to peace" in order to demonstrate his "patriotism" to an expectant public, and thus took a position virtually indistinguishable from that of civilizationists.

40 Fred Weir, "Moscow's moves in Georgia track a script by right-wing prophet," *EVRAZIA*, September 23, 2008, available at http://evrazia.org/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=4089 (accessed June 3, 2011).

41 Michael Mann, "A Political Theory of Nationalism and its Excesses," in *Notions of Nationalism*, ed. Sukumar Periwal (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1995): 62, 44-63.

The Domestic Civilizationists

Russia's civilizationists have maintained a consistent and inflexible position regarding Georgia. Indeed, most of their contemporary sentiments were already evident in the early 1990s when high-level politicians such as Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov and MP Sergei Baburin expressed open sympathy for secession of Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Adzhara from Georgia on the basis of their historical ties with Russia, which had (in their view) always acted as the guarantor of their statehood.[42] Georgian policy under its first post-Soviet president, Zviad Gamsakhurdia was widely regarded as aggressively nationalist even by neutral observers.[43] Nevertheless the Russian nationalists went further, arguing that Georgia had committed "genocide" against the Abkhaz and South Ossetians in 1992-3, and was itself and inherently nationalist and aggressive state. Yet they maintained an unswerving hostility towards Georgia's second president Eduard Shevardnadze for his alleged complicity in the collapse of the USSR. Politicians like Baburin developed close ties with the Abkhaz leadership in particular, often visited the region, and allegedly assisted them with supplies (including arms).[44] In doing so, they joined forces with elements of the Russian military in intervening directly to provide military support and training for the Abkhaz.[45] After the ceasefire in 1993, the civilizationists mainly affected Russia's relations with Georgia by the blocking tactics of the communists and nationalists in the otherwise ineffectual Duma. Above all, the Duma blocked the ratification of the 1994 Georgian–Russian Friendship Treaty and an additional treaty in 1995.[46]

These nationalists have consistently seen Georgia as a troublemaker and zone of instability. They were utterly unimpressed by its "so-called democracy" – Aleksandr Dugin saw Georgia as a failed state, while Vladimir Zhiri-

42 E.g. Ivan Yelistratov and Sergei Chugayev, "The Russian Parliament May Consider the Question of the Annexation of South Ossetia by Russia," *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press* 24, no. 44 (July 15, 1992): 16.
43 Nicole J. Jackson, *Russian Foreign Policy and the CIS* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2003):114.
44 *Ibid.*
45 Thornike Gordadze, "Georgian-Russian relations in the 1990s," in *The Guns of August 2008: Russia's War in Georgia*, 28-48.
46 Filippov, "Diversionary Role of the Georgia–Russia Conflict."

novskii regarded it as a complete US client that falsified its elections.[47] As might be expected, the civilizationists regarded the Rose Revolution profoundly negatively from the outset, seeing it as destabilizing for the whole North Caucasus, and a foothold for US influence in the region. They were also instinctively hostile to Saakashvili, seeing him as a US puppet whose real masters resided in Washington. They took the lead in denigrating him as a "mad and bad" Hitler- or Pinochet-style dictator.[48] Nor did they conceal their revanchist aims, basically supporting a policy of divide and rule against Georgia and its forcible incorporation within the Russian sphere of influence. As politicians like Zhirinovskii and Dugin argued, this could be achieved simply by the recognition of the unrecognised entitities and military action against Saakashvili.

Official Discourses Concerning Georgia

Until the Putin period such civilizationist views were officially marginalized in the Duma. The Yeltsin administration (although not the military high command, which detested him) maintained largely benign relations with Shevardnadze and usually simply ignored parliamentary outrage. It gave official support to Georgian territorial integrity and supported multilateral mechanisms for achieving autonomy for the unrecognised entities within the Georgian state. However, official rhetoric masked an essentially pro-Abkhaz approach at the "implementation level", whereby unofficial support for the separatists was used to keep Georgia firmly in the Russian sphere of influence and hinder resolution of the "frozen conflicts."[49] Moreover, the benign approach continued only as long as Georgia accepted Russian protégés in its power ministries – once Georgia demurred, the benign policies stopped.[50]

47 Aleksandr Dugin, "Mengrely sleduyushie," Russia.Ru, August 19, 2008; Vladimir Zhirinovskii, "V Gruzii bystree rozhdayutsya novye staliny, chem novye demokratii," Regnum.ru, January 11, 2008, available at http://www.regnum.ru/news/941117.html (accessed June 2, 2011).

48 Vladimir Zhirinovskii, "Zhirinovskii nazval Saakashvili 'gruzinskim Pinochetom', sposobnym 'krov'yu Gruziyu zatopit,'" NEWSru.com, November 8, 2007.

49 Bertil Nygren, "Russia's Relations with Georgia: The Impact of 11 September," in *Russia as a Great Power: Dimensions of Security under Putin*, ed. Jakob Hedenskog et al. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), 156-181.

50 Gordadze, "Georgian-Russian relations in the 1990s."

It's easy to forget that Moscow's view of Tbilisi had already started to deteriorate markedly before the Rose Revolution and that this revolution was not as pivotal as some accounts suggest.[51] Georgia's orientation towards NATO membership from 2002 onwards was critical in this evolution, as were disputes about alleged Georgian support for Chechen separatists residing in the Pankisi Gorge in Northern Georgia.[52] Nevertheless, Moscow was, initially at least, not nearly as critically disposed towards Mikheil Saakashvili in the aftermath of the Rose Revolution as the nationalists were and hoped for an improvement in relations.[53] Indeed, Moscow was sufficiently pragmatic in 2003-2004 to intercede on Saakashvili's behalf to facilitate first Shevardnadze's peaceful resignation and later that of Aslan Abashidze, whom Saakashvili unseated as president of Adzhara.

By 2005-2006, the decline in mutual relations was evident: the initial flashpoint was a dispute about smuggling, but geopolitical rivalry after the Orange Revolution and Saakashvili's marked tilt westward and poor personal relations with Putin were more lasting catalysts.[54] Clearly, the August conflict cannot be understood without the prospect of Georgia's entry into NATO and the Western recognition of Kosovo in 2007-2008, which Moscow continually portrayed as an unacceptable Western geopolitical demarche that would encourage separatism in the CIS.

Alongside this mutual antipathy, official Moscow increasingly began to share the nationalist view of both the Georgian state – and Saakashvili personally – as unstable and aggressive. Putin's personal distaste for Saakashvili became evident (albeit he reserved his most choice expressions such as "hanging him by the balls" for private conversation).[55] As with Ukraine, Moscow often deni-

51 Gail Lapidus, "Between Assertiveness and Insecurity: Russian Elite Attitudes and the Russia-Georgia Crisis," *Post-Soviet Affairs* 23, no. 2 (January 1, 2007): 138-155.

52 Nygren, "Russia's Relations with Georgia."

53 Vladimir Novikov and Gennadii Sysoev, "Mikhail Saakashvili poluchil vid na vizy," *Kommersant'*, February 13, 2004, available at http://www.kommersant.ru/doc.aspx?DocsID=449512 (accessed June 2, 2011).

54 Yurii Simonyan, "Krainimi sdelali mirotvortsev," *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, September 22, 2005, available at http://www.ng.ru/cis/2005-09-22/5_morotvorcy.html (accessed June 2, 2011).

55 "Georgia's Saakashvili Nervously Giggles to Putin's Intention to Hang Him by the Balls,", *Pravda*, November 14, 2008, available at http://www.kommersant.ru/doc.aspx?DocsID=449512 (accessed June 2, 2011).

grated any "democratic" achievements of the coloured revolution. In the doctrine of "sovereign democracy" promulgated largely between 2005-7, Georgia and Ukraine were the archetypes of non-sovereign states, with formal democratic procedures but *de facto* governed from abroad (by the US).

However, even until early 2008, Moscow's official rhetoric upheld the virtues of international law and Georgian territorial integrity. Yet, as later became evident, the *de facto* rhetorical and material support for the unrecognized entities increased exponentially; most notably the passportization of the Abkhaz and Ossetians, which later allowed Georgian residents to be regarded as not just compatriots but Russian citizens; similarly, visa restrictions against Georgians (which excluded residents of separatist areas) undermined Georgian territorial integrity. Above all, Russia increasingly directly appointed its own security service personnel to government in Abkhazia and especially South Ossetia. For example, the former Military Commander of Perm' *oblast'* Vasilii Lunev became South Ossetian Minister of Defence in March 2008.[56] More and more, Russia recognised the separatist entities' rights to "self-determination" and separatist leaders were increasingly described as fully-fledged Presidents and granted state visits to Moscow.[57]

The Cross-Fertilization of Discourses

At a rhetorical and even implementation level, then, the Russian authorities were increasingly coming to share some of the proclivities of the civilizationists. The *de facto* cross-fertilization of discourses became most evident in the Anti-Georgian campaign of October-November 2006, which was "the first incident of officially endorsed ethnic discrimination in contemporary Russia".[58]

56 Andrei Illarionov, "The Russian Leadership's Preparation for War, 1999-2008," in *The Guns of August 2008: Russia's War in Georgia*, 67.

57 Vladimir Solov'ev and Vladimir Novikov, "Otbiranie zemel'. Rossiya otkazyvaet Gruzii i Moldavii v territorial'noi tselostnosti," *Kommersant'*, June 2, 2006, available at http://www.kommersant.ru/doc.aspx?DocsID=678700 (accessed May 26, 2011).

58 Galina Kozhevnikova, "Radical nationalism in Russia and efforts to counteract it in 2006," SOVA Center, May 22, 2007, available at http://www.sova-center.ru/en/xenophobia/reports-analyses/2007/05/d10896/; Galina Kozhevnikova, "Antigruzinskaya kampaniya: Gosudarstvennaya propaganda i obshchestvennoe soprotivlenie," SOVA Center, May 4, 2007, available at http://www.sova-center.ru/hate-speech/publications/2007/05/d10770 (accessed June 2, 2011).

The campaign was initially prompted by a diplomatic spat over the Georgian arrest of Russian "spies" and their provocative display on Georgian TV on 27 September 2006. A Soviet-type campaign ensued with some Aesopian signals from the top. In early October, Putin declared the need for regional authorities to "protect the interests of Russian manufacturers and Russia's native population" in the country's outdoor markets.[59] This was taken as code for the harassment of (particularly Georgian) immigrants by local officials and extreme nationalist groups alike, since a central theme of the campaign was that of Georgian criminality. In particular, the Georgian diaspora was portrayed as providing the financial support for Georgian aggression against Russia. Official measures were taken centrally with co-ordinated activity against "illegal" immigrants. The Russian Migration service had to deny reports that it was setting up a special department for Georgians.[60] The police in several regions demanded lists of pupils with "Georgian surnames" in schools. Mass deportations followed, alongside several deaths in custody. Notable too was the targeting not just of Georgian citizens, but Russian citizens of Georgian origin such as the author Boris Akunin (Grigorii Chkhartishvili). The campaign was supported even by (relatively) moderate pro-state media like *Izvestiya*. More remarkable was that extreme nationalist groups interpreted the campaign as official endorsement for their actions (for example, the Movement Against Illegal Immigration declared that it was ready to help the regime "rid the country of Georgians."[61])

This campaign ran out of the control of its initiators and had to be reined back – partly due to the habitual practice of lower levels of the Russian bureaucracy to over-fulfil the plan. But xenophobic statements by both the state-run media and law-enforcement experts showed that engrained nationalism was directly responsible for instituting an atmosphere of hysteria.[62] Yet even the

59 "Prezident RF prikazal razobrat'sya na rynkakh s inostrantsami," *Lenta.Ru*, October 5, 2006, available at http://lenta.ru/news/2006/10/05/putin/ (accessed June 2, 2011).

60 "Migratsionnaya sluzhba Rossii ne nashla u sebya "gruzinskogo" otdela," *Lenta.Ru*, October 5, 2006, available at http://lenta.ru/news/2006/10/05/fms1/ (accessed June 2, 2011).

61 "Natsionalitsy podderzhali Putina: DPNI reshilo pomoch' prezidentu ochistit' stranu ot gruzin," NEWSru.com, October 6, 2006, available at http://www.newsru.com/russia/06oct2006/dpni_print.html (accessed June 2, 2011).

62 Kozhevnikova, "Antigruzinskaya kampaniya: Gosudarstvennaya propaganda i obshchestvennoe soprotivlenie."

Eurasianist commentator Mikhail Leont'ev soon declared on his Channel 1 programme *Odnako* that the idea of closing Georgian restaurants and mass expulsion of Georgians was "stupid" and the campaign was directed not against Georgians (while admitting that it aimed to help Georgians get rid of "parasites" like Saakashvili themselves).[63] The Russian Public Chamber condemned the campaign on October 12 and it had run out of steam by November, after Putin on October 26 announced that "ethnically motivated" law enforcement actions were "inadmissable".[64] This indicated that the authorities' exploitation of ethnic sentiment from the top had led to an autonomous "demand from the bottom" which the Kremlin had to deflate lest it lost the nationalist agenda. However, this campaign directly inspired the anti-Estonian campaign of March 2007, which marked a new degree of co-ordination and sophistication.

In evaluating the role of Russian nationalism in the build-up to August 2008, one must note that there were other rationales for Moscow's conduct. Certainly, the conflict clearly fulfilled some of Russia's long-term military and security aims (and many of these were already articulated even under Yeltsin when the Westernizers dominated foreign policy making): namely its determined opposition to Georgian NATO membership, its insistence on primacy in its sphere of influence and fundamental opposition to pro-Western centrifugal tendencies in the CIS.[65] Moreover, the generally convincing argument that Russia had been planning the war for months or years should not necessarily lead to ignoring that the EU, US and Georgia itself wittingly or unwittingly escalated Moscow's actions (this ignorance was widespread in the statements of some Western and Georgian politicians in the immediate aftermath).[66] Cer-

63 Mikhail Leont'ev, "Analyticheskaya programma "Odnako" s Mikhailom Leont'evym," Pervyi Kanal, October 5, 2006, available at http://www.1tv.ru/news/print/99387 (accessed June 2, 2011).

64 Vladimir Putin, "Prezident skazal pro...," *Vremya novostei*, October 26, 2006, available at http://www.vremya.ru/2006/197/52/164083.html (accessed June 2, 2011).

65 Andrew Monaghan, "The Russo-Georgian Conflict: Immediate Report" (NATO Defense College Research Division, August 2008); Haas, *Russia's Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century*.

66 For the Russian build-up see Illarionov, "The Russian Leadership's Preparation for War, 1999-2008"; Pavel Felgenhauer, "After August 7: The Escalation of the Russia-Georgia War," in *The Guns of August 2008: Russia's War in Georgia*, 162-180; Pavel Felgenhauer, "Eto byla ne spontannaya, a splanirovannaya voina," *Novaya gazeta*,

tainly, Western negligence played a role, as did Georgia's own nationalism and a cycle of provocations on both sides.[67] Moreover, Russia's self-serving arguments that Dmitrii Medvedev had little choice but to pursue military intervention and recognition of the separatist entities in response to attacks on its compatriots cannot simply be dismissed. Arguably, as a new president widely derided as a liberal figleaf with little domestic or foreign legimitacy, Medvedev's own political position would have been critically weakened had he not defended Russian "citizens".[68]

What is vital though, is that Russian domestic discourse had increasingly framed the conflict in such a way that Moscow felt it had no option but to respond with such a hard line. In this, Russian civilizational nationalism played a direct role in provoking domestic sentiments to which the Kremlin felt it had to respond. This arguably increased Russia incentives to use the conflict to teach the West and Georgia a lesson and to show that it demanded respect as a regional and global player. Certainly, the civilizationists played a significant role in escalating internal and external tension. Nationalist forces outside and inside parliament (especially the LDPR and Communists) called repeatedly for recognition of the unrecognised entities throughout 2008, and were only partly assuaged when Moscow upgraded relations with Abkhazia and South Ossetia in April 2008 (this itself ratcheted up expectations that would be difficult to de-escalate later). One of the most prominent trouble-makers, Aleksandr Dugin, visited South Ossetia several times in 2008, when his Eurasian Youth Movement helped train the Ossetian militias and participated in sporadic fighting.[69] Dugin repeatedly expressed his preference for the military invasion of Georgia, occupation of Tbilisi and partition of the Georgian state.

August 14, 2008, available at http://www.novayagazeta.ru/data/2008/59/04.html (accessed June 2, 2011).

67 Vicken Cheterian, "The August 2008 war in Georgia: from ethnic conflict to border wars," *Central Asian Survey* 28, no. 2 (2009): 155; for Western culpability see Stephen Blank, "From Neglect to Duress: The West and the Georgian Crisis Before the 2008 War," in *The Guns of August 2008: Russia's War in Georgia*.

68 Monaghan, "The Russo-Georgian Conflict."

69 Marlène Laruelle, "Neo-Eurasianist Alexander Dugin on the Russia-Georgia Conflict," *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Analyst*, September 3, 2008, available at http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/4928; "Road to War in Georgia: The Chronicle of a Caucasian Tragedy," Spiegel Online, August 25, 2008, available at http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,574812,00.html (accessed June 2, 2011).

In the aftermath of the conflict he continued to inflate the number of South Ossetian deaths and called for imperial renaissance and incorporation of Georgia within the Russian sphere-of-influence: "Georgia must orientate itself toward Russia, not in order to get back its irredeemably lost territories, but in order not to lose its remaining ones".[70] Similarly, Mikhail Leont'ev used his *Odnako* programme to disparage American values and the idea of a "world community" and attack Saakashvili as a "reptile" and "war criminal".[71]

As Sakwa notes, domestic anti-Western sentiment has ebbed and flowed, but the tide tends to be higher after each ebb.[72] Not coincidentally therefore, George W. Bush and Mikheil Saakashvili were regarded in Russian public opinion as Russia's chief enemies long before August 2008. More generally, Russian discourse over Georgia conformed to long-rehearsed patterns of rallying round the flag against foreign enemies: in the aftermath of the conflict, both Medvedev and Putin emphasised the geopolitical roots of the war and the prime role of US interests in Georgia. Notably, Medvedev got some of his strongest support from civilizationists who had previously regarded him as "toothless". For example, *Zavtra* regarded Medvedev as finally becoming an independent and authoritative politician.[73] August 2008 marks the peak of symbiosis between the authorities, nationalists and the wider population. The Kremlin hit its population with a media barrage – "the Russian focus was on the domestic audience and the state-directed electronic media went into overdrive to present the Kremlin's case to its people".[74] This was successful: both Putin and Medvedev reached historically high levels of popular approval

70 Andrei Babitskii, "Dugin: Gruziya dolzhna orientirovat'sya na Rossiyu dlya togo, chtoby ne poteryat' ostaln'nye territorii," *Ekho Kavkaza*, May 15, 2010, available at http://www.ekhokavkaza.com/articleprintview/2042713.html (accessed June 2, 2011).

71 Mikhail Leont'ev, "Analiticheskaya programma "Odnako" s Mikhailom Leont'evym," *Pervyi Kanal*, August 10, 2008, available at http://www.1tv.ru/news/print/29950 (accessed June 2, 2011).

72 Richard Sakwa, "'New Cold War' or twenty years' crisis? Russia and international politics," *International Affairs* 84, no. 2 (3, 2008): 241-267.

73 Ivan Lentsev, "Triumf duumvirata," *Zavtra*, August 13, 2008, available at http://zavtra.ru/cgi//veil//data/zavtra/08/769/24.html (accessed June 2, 2011).

74 Richard Sakwa, "The Five-Day War of 2008 through the prism of conspiracy theories," in (presented at the ICCEES World Congress, Stockholm, 2010)., p. 13

in September 2008 (88 percent and 83 percent respectively according to Levada Center surveys[75]).

Most significantly, in the aftermath of August 2008, elite and nationalist discourses towards Georgia became virtually indistinguishable in their analysis of the origins and outcomes of the war (if not quite the longer-term strategic lessons). Both quickly consolidated around a discourse of Georgian "aggression" against a defensive and unoccupied South Ossetian population. Both Medvedev and Putin described the alleged death of 2000 South Ossetians as "genocide". Georgians in general and Saakashvili in particular were war criminals firing on peacekeepers and unarmed inhabitants in dead of night.

Even though the Russian prosecutor general quickly revised the number of South Ossetian civilian deaths drastically downwards to 162, this information was not widely publicized, and the shared civilizationist discourse has continued to be dominant domestically, with only marginal changes and nuances.[76] This is not to deny that a number of Russian analysts have been extremely critical of the Russian military conduct during the war, even including prominent Russian civilizationist Aleksandr Prokhanov who argued that (in military strategy) at least Russia actually lost.[77] However, these analysts largely ignore political questions.

The shared Russian discourse continues to ignore the historical roots of the conflict in general, and any Russian culpability in particular. Such historical narrative refers only to previous Georgian atrocities in the 1990s and Georgian "aggression" in the 2000s. A number of Russian publications and films (e.g. *The War of 08.08.08. The Art of Betrayal*) reinforce an emotional message focussing on Russian solidarity with the beleaguered population of "Tskhinval" and convey incredulity at the (alleged) criminal and inhuman bar-

75 "President's Performance in Office- Trends. Long Trend," RussiaVotes.org, available at http://www.russiavotes.org/president/presidency_performance_trends.php#190 (accessed May 10, 2011).

76 Margarita Akhvlediani, "The fatal flaw: The Media and the Russian Invasion of Georgia," in *Crisis in the Caucasus: Russia, Georgia and the West*, ed. Paul B. Rich (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), 113-140.

77 Aleksandr Prokhanov, "Esli zavtra voina," *Zavtra*, March 4, 2009, available at http://www.zavtra.ru/cgi/veil/data/zavtra/09/798/11.html (accessed June 2, 2011); and Ruslan Pukhov, ed., *The Tanks of August* (Moscow: Centre for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies, 2009).

barity of the Georgian forces (trained and funded by the US).[78] Images of Saakashvili chewing his tie or cowering in terror at the approach of a Russian jet are repeatedly shown to indicate the cowardliness and rashness of the Georgian side.

Russian commentators continue to insist that not just intervention into Georgia but even Russian recognition of secessionist entities was absolutely inevitable and forced upon Russia by Georgian aggression. Intervention is regarded as a moral, humanitarian issue in order to defend Russian citizens (partly following NATO's rationale for intervention in Kosovo). For example, Vyacheslav Nikonov regards the event (with a much over-used phrase) as "Russia's 9/11" -- i.e. an existential challenge to which any viable state would have to respond.[79] Even neo-Eurasianist Aleksandr Dugin regards intervention as more a moral than geopolitical issue (although geopolitics are not absent since he regards Georgia as a Eurasian not European civilization whose national interests lie with Russia).[80] Most mainstream Russian commentators regard recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as an incontrovertible fact than can in no circumstances be reversed (the non-recognition of these states by most of the international community is either simply ignored or regarded as temporary). The salient facts are that Russia, by showing it can stand up for its interests irrespective of global opinion, has transformed from a post-Soviet to a global power as part of a newly multi-polar system, and that Washington suffered a strategic defeat.[81]

Even the publication of the EU's Tagliavini report in November 2009 did not change the dominant narrative. Although balanced coverage was present,[82] official Russian discussion focussed largely on Georgia's culpability for the

78 Akhvlediani, "The fatal flaw."

79 Vyacheslav Nikonov, "Moment istiny," Politika Foundation, September 3, 2008, available at http://www.polity.ru/articles/moment_i2.htm (accessed June 2, 2011).

80 Aleksandr Dugin, "A. Dugin: "Gruziya mozhet raspast'sya,"" KM.ru, September 26, 2008, available at http://uncensored.km.ru/uncensored/index.asp?data=26.09.2008+8:00:00&archive=on (accessed June 2, 2011).

81 Gleb Pavlovskii, "Predislovie," in *Voina i mir Dmitriya Medvedeva*, ed. Kirill Tanaev and Pavel Danilin (Moscow: Evropa, 2009): 6-9.

82 Aleksandr Gabuev, "Rossii i Gruzii pridetsya bit'sya ob doklad," *Kommersant'*, October 1, 2009, available at http://www.kommersant.ru/doc.aspx?DocsID=1246965 (accessed June 2, 2011).

outbreak of hostilities and said virtually nothing about the report's disputation of any evidence of genocide of South Ossetia, its allegations of ethnic cleansing of Georgians there, or its conclusion that Russian intervention was not legally justified in the first place and was disproportionate in its result. In this regard, an October 2009 edition of the *Sudite Sami* programme on Channel 1 hosted by Maxim Shevchenko was instructive: only Carnegie Foundation analyst Aleksei Malashenko differed (and then only marginally) from the general consensus that Georgia was entirely culpable for the conflict (even planning it in advance), that recognition of the separatist entities was inevitable, and that (in MP Sergei Markov's view) the Tagliavini report "inflicts a colossal blow on the Saakashvili regime".[83]

Table 2 shows the spectrum of Russian and Western views of the conflict. While Table 1 showed that statist and civilizationist approaches still differ in the conceptual underpinnings of foreign policy, they are fused almost into one when it comes to the specific issue of Georgia. In essence, they share a common understanding of the overall Georgia-Russia relationship, the August 2008 conflict's causes and immediate outcomes. Big differences are evident only in their proposed solutions; extreme civilizationists such as Dugin call for an imperialist, expansionist policy towards Georgia, Ukraine and other CIS states, whereas official views focus on preservation of the post-conflict status quo of a weakened non-NATO Georgia alongside proposals to revise European security institutions. However, even these distinctions prove sometimes hard to draw when prominent establishment politicians like Andrei Kokoshin, deputy leader of the pro-Putin United Russia party's Duma fraction, have argued that the only "disproportionality" of the Russian response in August 2008 was that it was "too soft" and did not make a Yugoslav-style strike against Georgian infrastructure.[84]

83 "Tragediya Tskhinvala: vinovnyi nazvan," *Pervyi Kanal*, October 1, 2009, available at http://www.1tv.ru/prj/sudsami/vypusk/print_version/2144 (accessed June 2, 2011).
84 *Ibid.*

Table 2. Divergent Russian/Western foreign policy images: Russia-Georgia relations

	Messianic Westernizers	*Moderate Westernizers*	*Statists*	*Civilizationists*
Location	Georgia: US pro-Georgia lobby; Russian liberals	EU; Obama administration; Some Russian liberals	Russian establishment	Pro-establishment media; nationalist politicians
Nature of Georgian state	Beacon of democracy	Flawed democracy	Unstable, non-sovereign state	Failed state
Russia's aims in Georgia	Imperialist aggression	Aggressive pursuit of sphere-of-influence	Pragmatic cooperation; Sphere-of-influence	Russian dependency; Sphere-of-influence
Causes of Russia-Georgia War	Russian aggression and "trap"	Russian provocation/invasion: Georgian overreaction	Georgian gression/genocide; Russian humanitarian intervention/self-defence	Georgian genocide; Russian humanitarian intervention/self-defence
Consequences of Russia-Georgia War	Existential challenge to Euro-Atlantic institutions	Regional destabilization; problematic Russia-West relations	Regional stability; need to rethink European security	Regional stability; Weakening of Euro-Atlantic alliance
Attitude to Saakashvili	Exemplary democrat	Flawed democrat	(War) criminal	War criminal/Fascist
Future dynamics of Russo-Georgian relationship	Need for principled Western/NATO containment of Russian expansionism	Need for confidence-building and protection of Georgian sovereignty; NATO membership postponed	Georgian sovereignty respected within post-conflict borders; Russia-Georgia relations to resume post-Saakashvili	Post-conflict borders the first stage in Russian imperial renaissance

Source: Author's conceptualization.

There are arguably far greater nuances and even disagreements in Western positions. While the consensus of Western analysis is that Russia wanted and planned the war, there are evident differences between what might be called "Messianic Westernizers", those who (like John McCain and Mikheil Saakashvili) have a Manichean view of good Georgia vs. evil Russia and the "Moderate Westernizers", who impute blame more impartially (although the Messianic view was dominant in the war's aftermath, the moderate view has become the consensus).

In the lead-up to and aftermath of the war, the civilizationist approach spilled into foreign policy rhetoric to an unprecedented degree. In August 2008, Medvedev's demands that the Georgian government respect the Russian government, its people *and its values* indicated the increasing projection of a "sense of grievance into its foreign policy."[85] More notably, Medvedev's July 2008 foreign policy concept mentioned, for the first time, global politics taking on a "civilizational dimension", giving civilizationist foreign policy stances a doctrinal legitimacy they had previously lacked.[86]

However, whether this is a long-term tendency remains ambiguous. Since the peak of the conflict, Moscow's official rhetoric has become more restrained and less incendiary. The word "genocide" has been dropped from high-level discourse and the emphasis has been on rationality and common interests. As Foreign Minister Lavrov said in the immediate aftermath of the conflict, the only ideology determining foreign policy is "common sense and the supremacy of international law".[87] In December 2008, Medvedev added that Russia and the West *shared* the same values (even if they were mutually misunderstood), which directly repudiates civilizationism.[88] Even during the conflict, Medvedev was at pains not to repeat the pogrom-like campaign of 2006 by insisting on the political, not ethnic basis of the conflict, and has since repeat-

85 Christian Caryl, "The Russians Are Coming?," *The New York Review of Books*, February 12, 2009, available at http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2009/feb/12/the-russians-are-coming-2/ (accessed June 2, 2011).

86 "Kontseptsiya vneshnei politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii," *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, July 12, 2008, available at http://www.rg.ru/2008/05/26/koncepciya-dok (accessed June 2, 2011).

87 Sergei Lavrov, "Litsom k litsu s Amerikoi: Mezhdu nekonfrontatsiei i konvergentsiei," *Profil'*, October 13, 2008, available at http://www.profile.ru/items/?item=27218 (accessed June 2, 2011).

88 Quoted in Tsygankov, "Russia in the Post-Western World, ", p. 353.

edly warned against domestic nationalist extremism. Moscow's policy towards Georgia has now changed tone towards a charm-offensive among the Georgian population, with Medvedev stressing Russia's centuries-old friendship with ordinary Georgians.

Nevertheless, in substance, Moscow's policies have changed little. The Kremlin has expanded its attempts to delegitimize the Georgian "regime", which it continues to regard as criminal and now largely ignores except when it can embarrass it (for example by promising to build a replica of the demolished Kutaisi war-monument in Moscow[89]). Medvedev openly stated that he regarded Saakashvili as a "political corpse".[90] Russia continues to blame Georgia for fomenting terrorism in the North Caucasus – a troubling development given increasing instability there. Moscow also uses methods tried and tested in other West-leaning CIS states, namely courting potential pro-Russian "fifth columnists" (such as former parliamentary speaker Nino Burdzhanadze and former Prime Minister Zurab Nogaideli) and hosting congresses of Georgian citizens in Moscow. This approach might offer a resumption of relations after Saakashvili demits office; however it offers no long-term solution if a new Georgian president also seeks to leave Russia's self-appointed sphere of influence. Certainly, direct Russian involvement in the politics of Ukraine, Moldova and Kyrgyzstan has, if anything, increased since 2008, and indicates that this sphere of influence is alive and well.

Georgia remains a deep irritant in Russo-Western relations, but as part of the "reset" there is agreement not to let this problem hinder other priorities. Indicatively, the draft new foreign policy concept leaked to *Russian Newsweek* in May 2010 prioritizes business and business-like links with the West and sidelines the Georgian issue entirely (it does not even mention Georgia directly, although it does argue the need to "actively oppose the attempts of extra-regional forces to interfere in Russia's relations with CIS countries").[91] There-

89 "Putin lays first stone to restore memorial to Georgian soldiers", *Russia Today*, May 9, 2010, available at http;//rt.com/news/stone-war-memorial/ (accessed May 10, 2011).

90 "Medvedev: Saakashvili is a 'Political Corpse,'" Civil.ge, September 3, 2008, available at http://www.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=19379 (accessed May 10, 2011).

91 Konstantin Gaaze and Mikhail Zygar, "Let there be sun again," *Russkiy Newsweek*, May 9, 2010, available at http://www.runewsweek.ru/country/34166/ (accessed June 2, 2011).

fore, perhaps the truest difference between statist and civilizationist foreign policy views is that for the statists, nationalism is far less consistently interesting than money. Yet, this is one more reason to be cautious about the reset: as Jeffrey Mankoff argues, "it is impossible to separate the new direction in foreign policy from the economic downturn" which undermined Russian self-confidence and has forced it to reengage with the West. With oil prices now rising again and the Russian economy growing, it remains an open question as to whether Russia will continue to play nice: it's notable that no new foreign policy concept has yet been *officially* endorsed.[92]

Conclusions

Clearly, then, the dynamics of the relationship between nationalism and foreign policy under Putin and Medvedev have changed over time. The constant is the dominance of statist nationalists in policy making, who have periodically exploited forms of more aggressive, ethnocentric civilizational nationalism in an instrumental way. This nationalism is dominant in the domestic media, and its primary purpose appears to be for domestic legitimacy. However, nationalist *ressentiment* has long been a serviceable part of the statists' rhetorical arsenal in foreign policy too – the image of offended, "principled", anger can be an effective one.

However, in the mid-late 2000s the domestic oversupply of civilizational nationalism and the undersupply of more liberal variants increasingly began to influence and directly contaminate Russian foreign policy on both a rhetorical and a conceptual level. Russian foreign policy towards Georgia is one area where the nationalist tiger momentarily escaped the cage, with official and civilizationist discourses becoming increasingly intertwined, indistinguishable and self-reinforcing. The key influence of this nationalism on the conflict with Georgia was providing a framing ideology: Russia increasingly saw Georgia as an illegitimate, hostile and aggressive state that needed to be taught a lesson lest its conduct fundamentally damage Russia's great-power status. Moreover, it provided a favourable domestic context whereby no alternative to

92 Jeffrey Mankoff, "Changing Course in Moscow," *Foreign Affairs* (September 7, 2010), available at http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/66743/jeffrey-mankoff/changing-course-in-moscow (accessed June 2, 2011).

Russia's actions was conceivable – the nationalists were prominent in creating an atmosphere of extreme jingoism that pushed Moscow to go further still.

So far, this narrative corroborates and deepens Asmus' view of a nationalistic and revisionist Russia. However, this view should be qualified: as authors like Tuminez indicate, historically extreme nationalism has rarely directly *driven* Russian conduct; rather the elite attempts to manipulate it for its own ends and to suppress it when it becomes destabilizing. Certainly, the Putin-Medvedev administrations have never consistently nor completely based either their domestic or foreign conduct on extreme nationalism. In particular, as Medvedev's attempts to limit domestic anti-Georgian sentiment show, the Kremlin remains very reluctant fully to endorse social mobilization around nationalist motivations. Since 2008, Russia has once again tried to move its foreign policy towards a more pragmatic, interest-based policy that indicates its continued fundamental hesitancy about prioritizing the role of ideas and values in international relations (even when these values are Russia's own). Overall, this indicates that the Russo-Georgian war was a brief but significant *deviation* from the general historical relationship between Russian nationalism and foreign policy, but this historical relationship was reinstated after 2009.

Whether this will fundamentally change the role of nationalism in Russian foreign policy in future is still unclear. The Kremlin is playing a dangerous game by using nationalism as a resource that can be switched on and off administratively to suit regime goals. In the late 2000s, the relationship between nationalism and foreign policy became somewhat dialectical – manipulating nationalism domestically stoked it to a degree that raised public expectations and risked driving elite responses (as indeed it did in the anti-Georgian campaign of 2006). Certainly, there is little in Russian domestic discourse since 2008 to indicate that the nationalist tiger has been securely caged, still less tamed.

Whereas the Weimar Russia scenario (extreme nationalist takeover) remains very much an unlikely worst-case;[93] more probable is a continued incompati-

93 Steffen Kailitz and Andreas Umland, "Why the Fascists Won't Take Over the Kremlin (for Now): A Comparison of Democracy's Breakdown and Fascism's Rise in Weimar Germany and Post-Soviet Russia" (Moscow: Publishing House of the State University

bility between the Russian authorities' declared foreign policy goals (interest-based, pragmatic, multilateral) and domestic aims (values-based, subjective, unilateral) which will cause contradictions and severe tensions for both, particularly given Russia's declared interests in "resetting" international relations and modernizing domestically. August 2008 shows that resolving these tensions with a more consistently civilizationist nationalist policy is highly tempting for the authorities, particularly where it has a free hand in its sphere of influence. Although the longer-term gains of such a policy are likely counter-productive, it would be a direct result of the structure of Russia's domestic political system, in particular its lack of developed democracy and liberal nationalism. A more democratic Russia would still most likely have national interests very distinct from other democracies (compare France and the US). However, if Michael Mann is right, the only long-term solution to a zero-sum, assertive and "aggressive" nationalism "is to achieve democracy – especially federal, inter-regional democracy". He adds however: "Unfortunately, this is easier said than done".[94] So, as with many other policy fields, a genuine resetting of Russia-Western relations will depend in large part on the genuine modernization of Russian domestic policy.

– Higher School of Economics, 2010), available at https://www.hse.ru/data/2010/06/10/1219754365/WP14_2010_02.pdf (accessed June 2, 2011).

94 Mann, "A Political Theory of Nationalism and its Excesses.", 62-3.

2 History, Memory and National Identity

Understanding the Politics of History and Memory Wars in Post-Soviet Lands

Igor Torbakov, Uppsala Center for Russian Studies, Sweden

"Tell me what you remember and I'll diagnose your condition."

Aleksandr Kustaryov[1]

At the end of June 2010, a remarkable text appeared on the website of the Russian liberal radio station *Ekho Moskvy*. Its author, the prominent Russian lawmaker Konstantin Kosachev, suggested that it's time for Russia to elaborate what he called a comprehensive "set of principles, an 'historical doctrine' of sorts" that would help Moscow to disclaim, once and for all, any political, financial, legal or moral responsibility for the policies and actions of the Soviet authorities on the territories of the former USSR and the states of Eastern Europe.[2] Kosachev's proposal is simple, blunt and seemingly effective. In a nutshell, it boils down to the two key points: (1) Russia fulfills all international obligations of the USSR as its successor state; however, Russia does not recognize any moral responsibility or any legal obligations for the actions and crimes committed by the Soviet authorities; and (2) Russia does not accept any political, legal or financial claims against it for violations by the Soviet authorities of international or domestic laws enforced during the Soviet period.

To be sure, Kosachev's proposal didn't emerge out of the thin air. His idea should be placed into the broader context of Russia's attempts at crafting and

1 Aleksandr Kustaryov, "Skazhi mne, chto ty pomnish,'" *Neprikosnovenny zapas*, no. 2 (2009).

2 Konstantin Kosachev, "Sovetskaya li Rossiya?" *Ekho Moskvy*, 29 June 2010, http://echo.msk.ru/blog/kosachev/691501-echo.phtml

pursuing the robust "politics of history." Like other members of the country's ruling elite, Kosachev appears to perceive memory and history as an important ideological and political battleground: Russia's detractors – both foreign and domestic – allegedly seek to spread interpretations of past events that are detrimental to Russia's interests, and there is an urgent need to resolutely counter these unfriendly moves. Several elements of such politics of history have already been introduced in Russia: a set of officially sponsored and centrally-approved textbooks with the highly pronounced statist interpretation of 20th-century Russian history;[3] the attempts to establish the "regime of truth" using legislative means; and the creation of a bureaucratic institution to fight the "falsification of history."[4]

Indeed, only one year before Kosachev's initiative, on May 15, 2009, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev announced the formation of a new presidential commission dedicated to "analyzing and suppressing all attempts to falsify his-

3 For a detailed analysis of the narratives contained in the Russian history textbooks, see David Wedgwood Benn, "The Teaching of History in Present-Day Russia," *Europe-Asia Studies* 62, no. 1 (2010); idem, "The Teaching of History in Putin's Russia," *International Affairs* 84, no. 2 (2008); Vera Kaplan, "The Vicissitudes of Socialism in Russian History Textbooks," *History and Memory* 21, no. 2 (2009); Taras Shul'ga, "Kakaya istoriya nuzhna sovremennoi Rossii? Obzor uchebnikov i posobii po noveishei istorii Rossii," *Russkii vopros*, no. 2 (2009); Thomas Sherlock, "History and Myth in the Soviet Empire and the Russian Republic," in Elizabeth A. Cole, ed., *Teaching the Violent Past: History Education and Reconciliation* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007); Maria Ferretti, "Obretennaya identichnost': Novaya 'ofitsial'naya istoriya' putinskoi Rossii," *Neprikosnovenny zapas*, no. 4 (2004); Vladimir Berelovich, "Sovremennye rossiiskie uchebniki istorii: mnogolikaya istina ili ocherednaya natsional'naya ideya?" *Neprikosnovenny zapas*, no. 4 (2002).

4 For a discussion of history politics in Russia and in some of the ex-communist states, see Alexei Miller, "Istoriya imperii i politika pamyati," *Rossiya v global'noi politike* 6, no. 4 (2008); idem, "'Istoricheskaya politika' v V ostochnoi Evrope: plody vovlechennogo nablyudeniya," Polit.ru, 7 May 2008, http://www.polit.ru/lectures/2008/05/07/miller_print.html; idem, "Istoricheskaya politika: update," Polit.ru, 5 November 2009, http://www.polit.ru/lectures/2009/11/05/istpolit_print.html; Mikhail Logvinov, "Istoricheskaya politika na postsovetskom prostranstve, ili: Na vostochnom fronte bez peremen," *Forum noveishei vostochnoevropeiskoi istorii i kul'tury*, no. 1 (2009), http://www1.ku-eichstaett.de/ZIMOS/forum/inhaltruss11.html; as well as four thematic publications: *Russian Analytical Digest* ("History Writing and National Myth-Making in Russia"), no. 72, 9 February 2010; *Pro et Contra* 13 ("Politics of History"), no. 3-4 (2009); *Evropa: Zhurnal Pol'skogo instituta mezhdunarodnykh del* 9 ("Trudnoe nasledie proshlogo: Rossiia v poiskakh istoricheskoi pravdy"), no. 2 (2009), and *Caucasus Analytical Digest* ("Writing National Histories: Coming to Terms with the Past"), no. 8, 17 July 2009.

tory to the detriment of Russia's interests."[5] The Kremlin's move appeared to be just the next logical step in Russia's ongoing history wars with its neighbors – a step that came hard on the heels of a proposed law to criminalize the questioning of the Soviet Union's victory in the Second World War and the "rehabilitation of Nazism."[6] Aleksandr Chubaryan, the director of the Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute of World History and a member of the newly formed presidential "history commission," has readily acknowledged the ongoing "hostilities" on the "historical front": "In Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States," noted he, "there is a problem of politicization of historical knowledge, which contributes to the [creation of] hostile images and representations of some countries as *Others*."[7]

There appears to be a consensus among professional historians and political analysts that over the past several decades, the "politics of history" has become a significant aspect of domestic politics and international relations, both within Europe and in the world at large.[8] One could thus suggest that Russia's latest moves should be seen in perspective and perceived as a manifestation of a Europe-wide trend, their clumsiness and cartoonish character notwithstanding.[9] This trend towards politicizing and instrumentalizing of history might take on various shapes and forms in different countries, but there are basically two main objectives that are usually pursued. First is the construction of a maximally cohesive national identity and rallying the society around the powers that

5 See the text of the Russian President's decree No. 549 "O Komissii pri Prezidente Rossiiskoi Federatsii po protivodeistviyu popytkam fal'sifikatsii istorii v ushcherb interesam Rossii" at http://graph.document.kremlin.ru/page.aspx?1;1013526. The new "history commission" consists of representatives from various government ministries (including the Defense Ministry, the FSB and its foreign intelligence counterpart, the SVR), the State Duma, the Russian Academy of Sciences, and "public organizations," but includes only three professional historians.

6 For a comprehensive discussion of the attempts to pass a "memory law" in Russia see Nikolai Koposov, "Istoriya i pravosudie: Kak istoricheskaya politika pytaetsya prikryt'sya Nyurnbergom," Polit.ru, 26 April 2010, http://www.polit.ru/institutes/2010/04/26/koposov_print.html.

7 Irina Granik et al., "Rossii garantirovano proshloe," *Kommersant*, 20 May 2009.

8 *The Politics of History and Its Variations in Post-Socialist Countries*, Seminar in Kazan, 5-6 March 2010.

9 Georgiy Kasyanov, "'Komissiya Medvedeva:' Vzgliad s Ukrainy," *Evropa: Zhurnal Pol'skogo instituta mezhdunarodnykh del* 9, no. 2 (2009): 23.

be. Second is eschewing the problem of guilt.[10] The two are clearly interlinked: having liberated oneself of the sense of historical, political, or moral responsibility, it is arguably much easier to take pride in one's newly minted "unblemished" identity based on the celebratory interpretation of one's country's "glorious past," which is habitually regarded as "more a source of comfort than a source of truth."[11] I would thus argue that it is extremely important to investigate the vital links between history, memory and national identity. The main objective of this article, then, is to explore how the memories of some momentous developments in the tumultuous 20th century (above all, the experience of totalitarian dictatorships, World War II, the "division" and "reunification" of Europe, the collapse of the Soviet Union) and their historical interpretations relate to concepts of national identity in the post-Soviet lands. Identities are understood here not as something immutable; by contrast, I proceed from the premise that identities are constantly being constructed and reconstructed in the course of historical process. "As communities and individuals interpret and reinterpret their [historical] experiences… they create their own constantly shifting national identities in the process."[12]

I will begin with the analysis of the reasons underlying the intensification of "history wars" between Russia and its neighbors. I will then discuss the prominent role that the reinterpretation of the history of World War II plays in the politics and geopolitics of identity in post-Soviet Eurasia. The analysis of Russia's symbolic politics will come next. I will conclude with exploring possible ways of reconciling national memories and historical narratives.

Why Escalation?

All is *not* quiet on the Eastern (European) front. The past two decades following the collapse of the Soviet Union have witnessed an escalation of memory

10 Ian Rachinsky, "Istoriia kak pole boya," *Evropa: Zhurnal Pol'skogo instituta mezhdunarodnykh del* 9, no. 2 (2009): 47.

11 Timothy Snyder, "Introduction," *East European Politics and Societies* 24, no. 1 (2010): 4.

12 Sarah J. Purcell, "War, Memory and National Identity in the Twentieth Century," *National Identities* 2, no. 2 (2000): 188-189. For a detailed discussion of the interrelation between history and identity see Margaret MacMillan, *Dangerous Games: The Uses and Abuses of History* (New York: Modern Library, 2009), particularly Chapter 4 "History and Identity," pp. 53-78.

wars in which Russia has largely found itself on the defensive, its official historical narrative being vigorously assaulted by the number of the newly independent ex-Soviet states. Suffice it to recall just the most important episodes of this monumental "battle over history." Following the Soviet collapse, Museums of Occupation were set up in Latvia and Estonia; one of the museums' main objectives is to highlight the political symmetry between the two totalitarian regimes that occupied the Baltics in the 20th century – German national-socialism and Soviet communism.[13] In May 2006, a Museum of Soviet Occupation opened in Tbilisi, Georgia, following the Baltic States' example. The same month, the Institute of National Memory was established in Ukraine, inspired by the Polish model.[14] In November 2006, the Ukrainian parliament passed a law recognizing the Holodomor (the disastrous famine of 1932-1933) as genocide of the Ukrainian people perpetrated by the Soviet communist regime.[15] In May 2009 a landmark academic and political event took place in Vilnius – over 80 representatives of European cultural journals convened in the Lithuanian capital to discuss the topic of "European Histories." The event's participants agreed that a comprehensive 20th century European history has yet to be crafted, and that the first step toward this goal should be the integration of Eastern Europe's tragic totalitarian experience into the overall European narrative.[16] That same year also saw the adoption of two international documents

13 See, for example, Gundega Michel and Valters Nollendorfs, "Das Lettische Okkupatsionsmuseum, Riga" in D. Ruge, ed., *Der Kommunismus im Museum* (Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2005); Valters Nollendorfs, *Museum of the Occupation of Latvia* (Riga: Strelnieku laukums, 2002).

14 See Roman Kabachiy, "Ukradennaya pamyat'," Polit.ru, 6 May 2010, http://www.polit.ru/institutes/2010/05/06/memory_print.html.

15 Jan Maksymiuk, "Ukraine: Parliament Recognizes Soviet-Era Famine As Genocide," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 29 November 2006; Georgiy Kasyanov, "Golodomor i stroitel'stvo natsii," *Pro et Contra* 13, no. 3-4 (2009). For a more detailed treatment of the politics of history in Ukraine see David R. Marples, *Heroes and Villains: Creating National History in Contemporary Ukraine* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2007); Tadeusz Olszanski, "Yushchenko's Historical Policy – A Tentative Assessment," *Eastweek CES*, 27 January 2010, http://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/eastweek/2010-01-27/yushchenkos-historical-policy-a-tentative-assessment; *Istorychna pam'yat' yak pole zmahan' za identychnist': materialy 'kruhloho stolu'* (Kyiv: Natsional'nyi instytut strategichnykh doslidzhen', 2008); P.W. Rodgers, "'Compliance or Contradiction'? Teaching History in the 'New' Ukraine: A View from Ukraine's Eastern Borderlands," *Europe-Asia Studies* 59, no. 3 (2007).

16 "Eurozine Conference Held in Vilnius," *Eurozine*, 20 May 2009, http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2009-05-20-summary-en.html

that couldn't fail to rile official Moscow – a resolution of the European Parliament entitled "On European Conscience and Totalitarianism"[17] and a resolution passed by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe entitled "Divided Europe Reunited: Promoting Human Rights and Civil Liberties in the OSCE Region in the 21st Century."[18] Both resolutions branded Nazism and Stalinism as similar totalitarian regimes, bearing equal responsibility for the outbreak of World War II and the crimes against humanity committed during that period. The resolutions strongly called for the unconditional international condemnation of European totalitarianism. Moscow's reaction to all of this was unambiguously negative; in particular, Russian lawmakers, incensed at Stalinism and Nazism being lumped together, called the OSCE resolution an "offensive anti-Russian provocation" and "violence over history."[19]

It would appear that the lawmaker Kosachev's programmatic initiative was also prompted by yet another perceived snub against Russia. Just days prior to posting of Kosachev's blog entry, the acting President of Moldova Mihai Guimpu issued a decree proclaiming June 28 as the "Day of Soviet Occupation of Moldova."[20] Guimpu's move seemed to be the last straw. Having conceded that in the ongoing grandiose "battle over history" the "official Russia" and most of its neighbors more often than not end up at the "opposite sides of the barricade," Kosachev appeared to have decided that something urgently needs to be done about this and set forth his blueprint of Russia's "historical doctrine."

There appear to be two sets of reasons behind the increasingly acrimonious disputes over history in which Russia is pitted against the former imperial borderlands. First is what might be called the "classical" politics of identity following the collapse of a multinational empire. Second, there is a specific geopolitical conjuncture primarily connected with the expansion of the European Union and the growing rivalry between the EU and Russia over their overlapping

17 See http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+IM-PRESS+20090401IPR53245+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN

18 See http://www.oscepa.org/images/stories/documents/activities/1.Annual%20Session/2009_Vilnius/Final_Vilnius_Declaration_ENG.pdf

19 Yulia Taratuta and Vladimir Vodo, "Rossiya popala v plokhuyu istoriyu," *Kommersant*, 2 July 2009.

20 Svetlana Gamova, "Kishinev brosil vyzov Moskve," *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 28 June 2010.

neighborhoods. An important subplot linked with both the Soviet Union's unravelling and the EU's eastward thrust is the struggle over the contested issue of Russia's own shifting identity.

Students of anthropology, political science and postcolonialism have long explored history writing (and mythmaking) as part of an overarching problem of nationalism, national identity and nation-building. Their key premise has been that (re)writing history and (re)making myths is what nation-states generally do, history being a principal tool to construct national identity.[21] It has also been argued (particularly forcefully within the field of postcolonial studies) that any regime change inevitably entails a confrontation with the past: "a new future requires a new past."[22] In cases when regime change, state creation and nation building coincide, the confrontation with the past becomes particularly acute. This is precisely the situation in which the countries that emerged from under the rubble of the Soviet Union found themselves.[23]

The key problem here is this: new states have emerged from the debris of the Soviet Union, but in many cases they exist without clear-cut identities or links to logically conceived "nations." Yet, identity, as some scholars argue, is decisively a question of empowerment. As Jonathan Friedman has perceptively noted, "The people without history …are the people who have been prevented from identifying themselves for others."[24] So what were, realistically, the available strategies that the newly independent ex-Soviet countries could resort to?

Under communism, studies of nationalism or national identities were not a terribly popular topic. "National question" in the Soviet Union was routinely explored as an aspect of class paradigm. As it has famously been postulated, liquidation of class distinctions (creation of classless society) would automati-

21 See MacMillan, *Dangerous Games*; Jonathan Friedman, "The Past in the Future: History and the Politics of Identity," *American Anthropologist* 94, no. 4 (1992).

22 Eric Foner, *Who Owns History? Rethinking the Past in a Changing World* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2003): 77.

23 See Rawi Abdelal, "Memories of Nations and States: Institutional History and National Identity in Post-Soviet Eurasia," *Nationalities Papers* 30, no. 3 (2002); Taras Kuzio, "History, Memory and Nation Building in the Post-Soviet Colonial Space," *Nationalities Papers* 30, no. 2 (2002); idem, "Nation Building, History Writing and Competition over the Legacy of Kyiv Rus in Ukraine," *Nationalities Papers* 33, no. 1 (2005); Kataryna Wolczuk, "History, Europe and the 'National Idea': The 'Official' Narrative of National Identity in Ukraine," *Nationalities Papers* 28, no. 4 (2000).

24 Friedman, "The Past in the Future," 837.

cally lead toward the solution of national problem – through the creation of the "new historical entity" (the "Soviet people") in which national/ethnic differences would be preserved in their harmless (i.e., non-political) ethnographic form. National histories of the Soviet Union's multifarious peoples were secondary (and highly controlled) narratives – the component parts of the Soviet grand narrative.

Following the demise of Communism and the Soviet Union's unraveling, the incipient nation-states either returned to national historiographic tradition (where it existed) or hastily set about creating one. One common feature has been the "nationalization of history" whereby the history of a newly born post-Soviet state is conceptualized as the history of a titular nation, the latter being associated with the titular ethic group.

Yet this strategy of nationalizing history inevitably leads to strains – both internally and externally. As Clifford Geertz noted, defining the national particularism may be fraught with inherent difficulties because "new states tend to be bundles of competing traditions gathered accidentally into concocted political frameworks rather than organically evolving civilizations."[25] Thus, "nationalization" of history centered on titular nation cannot help but produce what can be called the "mutually exclusive" histories, whereby national minorities are excluded and/or designated as *Others*. In the situation when all post-Soviet states are multi-ethnic and multi-cultural, the exclusivist narrative is counterproductive at best and outright dangerous at worst.

In fact, as many students of nationalism have pointed out, the construction or reconstruction of identity is indeed a violent and dangerous process for all those involved – both *within* the newly-emerged state and *without*. According to Friedman, "The emergence of cultural identity implies the fragmentation of a *larger unity* and is always experienced as a threat."[26] Roman Szporluk, a leading historian of Eastern Europe at Harvard, agrees. The making of one nation entails the unmaking of another, argues he: for example, the rise of particularist identities in the ex-Soviet republics leads to the demise of the overarching

25 Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (London: Fontana, 1993): 244.
26 Friedman, "The Past in the Future," 854.

Soviet identity; nation-building in Ukraine compels the remaking of the Russian nation.[27]

A recent Russian study based on the examination of nearly 200 school history textbooks and teacher guides from Russia's 12 post-Soviet neighbors demonstrated that the trends toward nationalizing history and "othering" are gaining momentum in most new independent states. The report, released in Moscow in the end of 2009 and entitled "The Treatment of the Common History of Russia and the Peoples of the Post-Soviet Countries in the History Textbooks of the New Independent States," argues that Russia's neighbors are now using textbooks that present Russia in all its historical incarnations as the enemy of the peoples of these countries. The study's authors note "with regret" that "except for Belarus and (to a lesser degree) Armenia, all the remaining countries have moved to present the rising generation with a nationalistic view of history, based on myths about the antiquity of one's own people, about the high cultural mission of its ancestors and about 'the cursed enemy'": the Russians. "If these tendencies continue," the report concludes, "then after 15 to 20 years, the events of the 20th century will be completely forgotten by the population. In the consciousness of the peoples of the former USSR will be formed an image of Russia as an evil empire which for centuries destroyed, oppressed and exploited them."[28] Remarkably, several surveys of history textbooks from the ex-Soviet republics conducted by local scholars (for example, the analyses carried out in Ukraine by Viktoria Sereda and Natalya Yakovenko, respectively) revealed the same prevalent trend – namely, the active use and abuse of the negative images of the *Other*.[29]

---

27 See Roman Szporluk, "From an Imperial Periphery to a Sovereign State," *Daedalus* 126, no. 3 (1997).

28 *Osveshchenie obshchei istorii Rossii i narodov postsovetskikh stran v shkol'nykh uchebnikakh istorii novykh nezavisimykh gosudarstv* (Moscow, 2009): 5, 12. For their part, authors of Russian history textbooks often seek to depict Russia as a homogeneous civilization which leads to the biased representation of certain non-Russian ethnic communities. See Victor Shnirelman, "Stigmatized by History or by Historians? The Peoples of Russia in School History Textbooks," *History and Memory* 21, no. 2 (2009); idem, "Rossiiskaya shkola i natsional'naya ideya," *Neprikosnovenny zapas*, no. 6 (2006).

29 See *Shkil'na istoriya ochyma istorykiv-naukovtsiv: Materialy Robochoi narady z monitoryngu shkil'nykh pidruchnykiv istorii Ukrainy* / Uporyadkuvannya ta redaktsiya Natali Yakovenko (Kyiv: Vydavnytstvo imeni Oleny Telihy, 2008); Natalya Yakovenko, "Kontseptsiya novogo uchebnika ukrainskoi istorii," Polit.ru, 18 March 2010,

Some Russian historians appear to have been unpleasantly surprised, even hurt, by what they called the blatantly nationalistic and viciously anti-Russian interpretations of Russian imperial and Soviet history by non-Russian scholars from neighboring states. "It is a revisiting, at a new level, of the theory of 'absolute evil' which used to be popular during the early Soviet period," contends Moscow University Professor Aleksandr Vdovin. "Back then, this nefarious role in Soviet historiography was played by the [Russian] Tsarism that 'oppressed the peoples of the empire.' Now it is Russia that is painted as the 'absolute evil.'"[30] But more perceptive Russian and international commentators seem to agree that a certain degree of anti-Russian bias in the new independent countries' historiographies was all but inevitable. It should not be treated as an "unexpected phenomenon," argues one Russian analyst; rather, it should be understood as a "norm."[31] In their efforts to assert their still shaky and fragile national identities and root them in the (re)invented national traditions, the new countries were bound to "push against" Russia's official historical narrative. "The shaping of an image of the ethnic or cultural *Other* has become an inalienable part of the cultural and political mobilization as well as of the politics of memory pursued by the newly independent states," writes the prominent Ukrainian historian Georgiy Kasyanov.[32] It should come as no surprise, adds Kasyanov, that in the post-Soviet space it was "Russia and the Russians" who ended up being the "absolute champions" as far as the forming of negative ethnic stereotypes and "othering" are concerned. Thus the ground for "history wars" was in fact inherent in the post-imperial situation. These conflicts could have been somewhat attenuated had Russia – a former imperial overlord -- had at least a modest success in what Germans call *Ver-*

---

http://www.polit.ru/lectures/2010/03/18/uchebniki_print.html. To get a sense of how heated the public debate over the concept of school history textbook in Ukraine is, see the polemic between Yakovenko and Prof. Yuri Mytsyk: Yuri Mytsyk, "Novoe ili podzabytoe staroe," *Zerkalo nedeli*, 7 February-13 February 2009; Natalya Yakovenko, "Likbez dlya professora," *Zerkalo nedeli*, 7 March-13 March 2009.

30 Aleksandra Samarina, "Istoriya umolchaniya," *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, 2 December 2009.

31 Aleksandr Karavayev, "'Novy istoricheskii mif' i konflikty interpretatsii," PROGNOSIS.ru, 29 June 2007, http://www.prognosis.ru/news/nacional/2007/6/29/histiry.html

32 Georgiy Kasyanov, "Natsionalizatsiya istorii ta obraz Inshoho," *Krytyka*, no. 1-2 (2006).

gangenheitsbewältigung, meaning coming to terms with the past.[33] But it hadn't. I will address Russia's stance in greater detail below.

Geopolitics of Identity

There is also an important geopolitical angle to this already tangled story. Over the past decade, Europe's geopolitical landscape has changed dramatically. The changes involve, above all, the EU's eastward enlargement and the accompanying shift in Russia's position in Europe. With these momentous developments, the reinterpretation of history – particularly during the wartime and postwar periods -- has come to be the focus of historical and political controversies across Europe. As the *Eurozine* editorial aptly put it, "Throughout Europe, history is ceasing to be something for historians alone. Instead, it is becoming both a public issue and an instrument of politics."[34]

Why this sudden spike in the politicization of history? It would appear that the EU enlargement has undermined a historical consensus that used to exist within and among the West European countries with regard to World War II and postwar experiences.[35] As some scholars have pointed out recently, three main narratives of war and dictatorship exist in regard to Europe: a

33 The vigor of the German debate on the country's terrible past is as yet unimaginable in today's Russia. The latest example of the frank process of national self-scrutiny in Germany is the exhibition "Hitler and the Germans: Nation and Crime" that opened in the German Historical Museum in October 2010. The show, the first to focus on Hitler since 1945, explores the sensitive issue of how the German society nurtured and empowered the Nazi dictator. See Michael Slackman, "Hitler Exhibit Explores a Wider Circle of Guilt," *New York Times*, 16 October 2010; Chloe E. M. Paver, "Exhibiting the National Socialist Past: An Overview of Recent German Exhibitions," *Journal of European Studies* 39, no. 2 (2009). One should not forget, though, that it took the Germans at least 20 years to start debating the Nazi past in earnest. See, for example, Hans Mommsen, "Changing Historical Perspectives of the Nazi Dictatorship," *European Review* 17, no. 1 (2009); Wulf Kansteiner, "Losing the War, Winning the Memory Battle: The Legacy of Nazism, World War II, and the Holocaust in the Federal Republic of Germany," in Richard Ned Lebow, Wulf Kansteiner, and Claudio Fogu, eds., *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006).

34 "European Histories: Toward a Grand Narrative," *Eurozine*, 3 May 2005, http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2005-05-03-eurozine-en.html.

35 For a very comprehensive analysis of the memories of WWII as well as of the postwar politics of memory in Europe, see Lebow et al., *The Politics of Memory*; Mikhail Gabovich, ed., *Pamyat' o voine 60 let spustya: Rossiya, Germaniya, Evropa* (Moscow: NLO, 2005).

West European story, a Soviet/Russian story, and an Eastern European story. Interestingly, the first two are somewhat similar in that both tend to highlight the glorious victory over Nazi Germany, successful postwar reconstruction and the long period of postwar peace and economic development. By contrast, East Europeans were largely focusing not so much on "liberation" as on the dark years of Soviet occupation and dreaming of their eventual "return to Europe."[36]

The leading Western historians of Eastern Europe, such as Norman Davies and Timothy Snyder, long argued that the West badly misunderstood the East European experience. "What seems to have happened is that western opinion was only gradually informed about the war in Eastern Europe over forty to fifty years and that the drip-feeding was insufficient to inspire radical adjustments to the overall conceptual framework," Davies argued several years ago.[37] But it is precisely Eastern Europe's devastating war experience that needs to be "recovered" and reintegrated into a European historical narrative. One has to remember that arguably the most awful acts of carnage and violence in Europe in the 20th century occurred in what Snyder calls the "bloodlands": the territories of Poland, Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine.[38] The sad irony, though, is that because after the war's end these countries found themselves behind the Iron Curtain and under Stalinist rule, their histories were marginalized or expelled altogether from a general European account. This "postwar exorcism," to use Michael Geyer's term, was carried out through a particular organization of knowledge about Europe. The latter, neatly following the postwar division of Europe, was split into *national histories* of Western

36 Timothy Snyder, "The Historical Reality of Eastern Europe," *East European Politics and Societies* 23, no. 1 (February 2009): 11.

37 Norman Davies, "Russia, the Missing Link," *The Sunday Times*, 1 May 2005. Quoted in: Martin Evans, "Memories, Monuments, Histories: The Re-thinking of the Second World War since 1989," *National Identities* 8, no. 4 (December 2006): 331. See also Norman Davies, *No Simple Victory: World War II in Europe* (New York: Penguin, 2006).

38 Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010). Tony Judt, the author of the well-received *Postwar* (2005), has persuasively argued that "those [states] which suffered the worst in the Second World War in Europe were the states that ended up under the Soviet Union; East Central Europe had a much worse war than West Europe – more people killed, more damage, more destruction, more collapse of structures, etc." See "Interview with Historian Tony Judt," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 1 October 2009.

Europe and *area studies* for Eastern Europe. Thus, "historiographic elision" was firmly institutionalized.[39] Curiously, it appears to linger on, even more than twenty years after the Wall fell. As Snyder contends, "[E]ven as East Europeans gained the freedom to write and speak of their own histories as they chose after 1989 or 1991, and even as many East European countries acceded to the European Union in 2004 and 2007, their national histories have somehow failed to become accepted as European. Their histories have failed to flow into a larger European history that all, in East and West, can recognize as such."[40]

But now the enlargement has made the accommodation of the East European perspective inevitable – as a necessary precondition for the solidarity of the extended EU. Pushing aside "the other half" of European history runs the risk of undermining the project of Europeanizing national histories. Furthermore, "it thwarts an assessment of Europe as a whole."[41]

But as East Europeans are pushing for the reintegration of their disastrous war experience into a (pan-)European narrative, they rarely manage to resist the temptation to turn the reinterpretation of World War II into the key element of their countries' politics of history. The reason behind this is simple. Most East European nations now view the wartime and postwar period as a "useable past" -- crucial for strengthening separate identity, giving a boost to populist nationalism, externalizing the communist past and casting their particular nation as a hapless victim of two bloodthirsty totalitarian dictatorships. The German historian Wilfried Jilge specifically points to the tendency of East European intellectuals to construct what he terms the "national Holocausts" and thus confer on their nations a status of victim – and the perceived moral high ground that goes along with it. "From this position of moral superiority, the crimes of one's own nation are justified as defensive actions," writes Jilge in an

39 Michael Geyer, "Historical Fictions of Autonomy and the Europeanization of National History," *Central European History* 22, no. 3-4 (September 1989): 331.

40 Snyder, "The Historical Reality," 11.

41 Geyer, "Historical Fictions," 334. The British historian Timothy Garton Ash concurs, pointing to the lingering gap between the historical narratives in Europe's west and east. "I do think that in our schools," says Garton Ash, "we should have history books which tell us the horrors of Nazism and the horrors of communism. And that absolutely isn't happening at the moment across Europe. We have very different historical stories…" See Ahto Lobjakas, "For Timothy Garton Ash, Europe Means Shared History," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 7 June 2009.

article tellingly titled "The Competition of Victims" – the phrase he borrowed from the former Polish Foreign Minister Wladyslaw Bartoszewski. "In this context," Jilge goes on, "national stereotypes serve to distance 'one's own' national history from 'false' Soviet history and thus to 'cleanse' 'one's own' nation of everything that is Soviet."[42]

This is yet another example of how Russia's East European neighbors, while reinterpreting their most dramatic 20th century experiences, are also reshaping their identities. They craft their historical narratives in such a way as to reposition themselves in Europe, seeking to strengthen their own sense of Europeanness and distinguish themselves from Russia, which is often cast as a non-European, Eurasian power – in a word, as Europe's constitutive *Other*. This is, of course, a problematic historiographical strategy. A number of East European intellectuals note that almost everywhere in Eastern Europe, the new ruling elites chose to base – in varying degrees and shapes -- their ideological legitimization on the conservative counterrevolutionary tradition that was dominant in the region during the interwar period, as well as on the mythology of the "national resistance" whose multifarious forms also included the collaboration with Nazi Germany, perceived as a suitable ally in the struggle against "Russian Communism." For this purpose, the Eastern European elites seek to (re)construct their countries' wartime histories as a story of the "national liberation struggle." In these new historical narratives, says Tamas Krausz, one of the leading Hungarian specialists in East European history, "Russia is made a scapegoat." Another negative consequence of this historical reinterpretation, Krausz and other like-minded Eastern European intellectuals argue, is that it is being accompanied by the rehabilitation of the ethnic nationalist thinking.[43]

Some Russian policymakers and analysts have taken to accusing Russia's neighbors of a "perverse habit" of nurturing and cultivating their collective "complexes and syndromes" in order to charge Russia with "imperial ambitions" and present it as a hostile *Other*. What they ignore, however, is that those countries do have real and deeply ingrained syndromes which are being fed by what they see as Russia's reluctance to come to terms with its

42 Wilfried Jilge, "Zmahannya zhertv," *Krytyka*, no. 5 (2006).
43 See Tamas Krausz, "Etnos, natsiya i istoriya," *Strategiya Rossii*, no. 7 (2010).

past. In his brilliant 1946 essay "The Misery of the Small East European Countries," the outstanding Hungarian political thinker Istvan Bibo specifically noted a peculiar psychological trait common to all nations of the region. This common trait, he argued, is an existential fear of the ultimate destruction of a national entity born of the centuries of catastrophic experiences: foreign conquests, partitions by stronger neighbors, ruthlessly crushed revolutions, violently suppressed liberal reforms. This fear, Bibo tells us, was linked to the concrete policies of a number of great powers that used to throw their weight around Eastern Europe: Ottoman Turkey, Hapsburg Austria, Germany and Russia.[44] But while the first three have undergone profound transformations and ceased to be perceived by the "sm all East European countries" as a threat, the nervousness about Russia appears to persist.

I would argue that the Eastern Europeans' lingering wariness of Russia is directly linked to the present-day Russia's ambiguous international identity. On the one hand, Russia claims legitimacy in Europe as a post-Soviet *European* state; on the other, it presents itself as the legal continuation of the Soviet Union. The latter stance entails two important implications: Russia's claim to a status of great power with a sphere of "privileged interests," and its reluctance to fully recognize Soviet/Stalinist crimes.

Russia's Predicament: Facing Up to the Difficult Past While Coming to Terms With the Great Loss

There is no question that Russia is seriously affected by this new historiographic situation stemming from the confluence of the post-imperial controversies and the history debates born of the re cent geopolitical changes in Europe. It should not then come as a surprise that Moscow responds, sometimes very harshly, to what it perceives as a challenge to its national interests. The latter are believed to be parti cularly gravely threatened by the "hostile interpretations" of World War II (or what is better known in Russia as the "Great Patriotic War"). My key point her e is that, similar to its Eastern European neighbors, Moscow's conduct, too, can only be properly understood within the

44 Istvan Bibo, "O bedstviyakh i ubozhestve malykh vostochnoevropeiskikh gosudarstv," in Istvan Bibo, *O smysle evropeiskogo razvitiya i drugie raboty* (Moscow: Tri kvadrata, 2004): 155-262.

context of Russian identity politics.[45] After all, what is at stake – as it is perceived by the Russian elites – in the ongoing history wars with the former Eastern Bloc satellites and ex-Soviet republics is no less than Russia's status as a "European nation."

So long as the erstwhile historical consensus remained intact, Russia's victory over Nazism legitimized its "great power" status in Europe and its sphere of influence in the eastern part of the continent. The new historical controversies over the nature of Soviet "liberation" of Eastern Europe effectively undermine Russia's status as the "liberator of Europe" and erode whatever symbolic capital it might claim to prop up its "Europeanness." What we are witnessing is basically a "clash" of two very different notions of "liberation." In today's Europe (and, for that matter, the United States), the liberation of Europe in World War II is inseparably welded with the idea of democracy – the restoration of democratic order in that part Europe which was cleansed by the Western Allies of the "brown plague." Such interpretation presupposes that whatever the Soviet Union did in the eastern half of Europe that fell under Stalin's control could be called anything but "liberation."[46]

45 A similar approach is pursued in Viacheslav Morozov, "Protecting 'Our' History: Politics, Memory, and the Russian State," *PONARS* Eurasia Policy Memo no. 64 (2009); Andrei Makarychev, "Pamyat', simulyakry i 'bor'ba s fal'sifikatorami,'" Eurasianhome.org, 17 June 2009, http://www.eurasianhome.org/xml/t/expert.xml?lang=ru&nic=expert&pid=2049&qmonth=06&qyear=2009; Tatiana Zhurzhenko, "The Geopolitics of Memory," *Eurozine*, 10 May 2007, http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2007-05-10-zhurzhenko-en.html.

46 What had actually happened "on the ground" was, of course, much less neat than the stark dichotomy of the "Western liberation" and the "Soviet suppression" that is currently being advanced by many Western policymakers and ideologues. In Eastern Europe, for more than half a century, "Yalta" has become a grim symbol of betrayal with the Western allies being perceived as accomplices in Stalin's expansion and, in Milan Kundera's words, the ensuing "tragedy of Central Europe." Eastern Europeans have a point. After all, John Kenneth Galbraith, then a top official in the U.S. Office of Price Administration, who appeared to consider the Soviet Union a compelling social experiment, suggested that "Russia should be permitted to absorb Poland, the Balkans, and the whole of Eastern Europe in order to spread the benefits of Communism." For his part, George Kennan, at the time a counselor of the American embassy in Moscow, privately advised Charles Bohlen, Roosevelt's interpreter and adviser on Soviet affairs in Yalta, to "divide Europe frankly into spheres of influence – keep ourselves out of the Russian sphere and the Russians out of ours." Ultimately, it was Realpolitik and not the lofty ideals of freedom that defined the contours of postwar Europe. See Fraser J. Harbutt, *Yalta 1945: Europe and America at the Crossroads* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Serhii M. Plokhy, *Yalta:*

Nowhere was the Russian official narrative – and the identity based upon it – challenged so vigorously of late as at the 2009 Vilnius Conference on "European Histories."[47] Addressing the gathering, Valdas Adamkus, the outgoing president of Lithuania, reminded his audience that for Eastern Europeans, it is not just the defeat of Nazi Germany that comes to mind on May 8, 1945. "For Lithuania, like many other eastern European nations, May 8 of 1945 did not bring victory over violence, but simply change of oppressor," Adamkus has forcefully stated. "Once again, history was turned into the handmaiden of politics and ideology and thrust upon Lithuania and its people to cover up injustice and crime, distort facts, slander independence and freedom fighters." Yale historian Timothy Snyder would completely concur. Attacking in a 2005 article what he called a "common European narrative" – which is largely shared by Moscow – Snyder asserted that 1945 "means something entirely different in most Eastern Europe – for most citizens of the states admitted to the Union in May 2004. For them, 1945 means a transition from one occupation to another; from Nazi rule to Soviet rule." Now, participating in the Vilnius gathering, Snyder offered his reinterpretation of European 20th century tragic experience that, according to one observer, "in key respects threw into question the established historical consensus."[48]

Such treatment of the wartime and postwar developments is regarded in Moscow as a direct attack on Russia's image as a great *European* power – a

---

The Price of Peace (New York: Viking, 2010); Alonzo L. Hamby, "Endgame: How the Big Three Concluded the Good War," *Weekly Standard* 16, no. 1 (2010).

47 The Vilnius Conference was preceded by a conference in Tallinn, Estonia, held in January 2008 and called "United Europe, United History." The conference's very title presupposed that the continent's unity depends on elaborating a common view on "European history," particularly on the history of World War II and its aftermath.

48 See "Eurozine Conference;" Timothy Snyder, "Balancing the Books," *Eurozine*, 3 May 2005, http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2005-05-03-snyder-en.html. To be sure, not everyone in Europe shares Snyder's "revisionist" approach towards the analysis of the causes and consequences of WWII. Some scholars argue that Snyder's thesis of the Nazi-Soviet equivalence and of a "double genocide" blurs the undeniable fact that ultimately it was Nazi Germany and not the Soviet Union which was responsible for the outbreak of WWII and the ensuing carnage. The critics also assert that Snyder unwittingly helps the far right politicians in the Baltic region (and in some other "new accession" states in the eastern half of the EU) to pursue their "politics of history" fueled by anti-Russianism and the desire to exculpate the region's Nazi collaborators and participants in the Holocaust. See Efraim Zuroff, "A Dangerous Nazi-Soviet Equivalence," *Guardian*, 30 September 2010; Dovid Katz, "Why Red Is Not Brown in the Baltics," *Guardian,* 1 October 2010.

status that the Kremlin leadership values highly. To get a better sense of the true extent of Moscow's wrath, one has to understand that 1945 represents the absolute pinnacle of Russia's geopolitical might: some scholars have argued that following its defeat in the Crimean war in 1856 and until the Soviet victory in WWII Russian power has been in a relative decline.[49] "Don't forget," Tony Judt reminded us,

> that as seen from a historian's perspective, a historian of contemporary Europe, Stalin was in many ways the natural successor to Catherine the Great, and the tsars of the 19th century, expanding into the Russian near west, and to the Russian southwest in particular -- territories that Catherine began her expansion into, which have always been regarded as crucial by Russian strategists, both because of access to resources, access to warm water ports, and because it gives Russia a role in Europe, as well as in Asia.[50]

Just consider two plain historical facts: Russia was among the biggest losers in World War I, and saw its statehood crumbling and the borderlands seceding, while World War II results confirmed at Yalta and Potsdam turned Russia (in the form of the Soviet Union) into the world's second superpower – a status which included Moscow's immense geopolitical clout in Europe. However, Russia's four-decades-long dominance over Eastern Europe was brought down in a series of "velvet revolutions" in 1989. As one pithy comment put it, "Russia was the main victor in WWII and the main loser in 1989."[51]

But what is particularly important for my discussion here is that, unlike most of its Eastern European neighbors, the post-Soviet Russia has refused to view the EU as a norm maker and is reluctant to accept its standards and values.[52] At the same time, Russian leadership adamantly insists that its country is in-

49 See Winfried Baumgart, *Der Friede von Paris: Studien zum Verhältnis von Kriegsführung, Politik und Friedensbewahrung* (München, 1972). This thesis is also discussed in Leonid Luks, "Predchuvstvie zakata Evropy i strakh pered Rossiei," *Forum noveishei vostochnoevropeiskoi istorii i kul'tury*, no. 1 (2005), http://www1.ku-eichstaett.de/ZIMOS/forum/inhaltruss3.html.

50 "Interview with Historian Tony Judt."

51 "European Histories."

52 Hiski Haukkala, "A Norm-Maker or a Norm-Taker? The Changing Normative Parameters of Russia's Place in Europe" in Ted Hopf, ed., *Russia's European Choice* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

herently European -- as European as any other major European state. One cannot find a better expression of this attitude than a defiant passage in Vladimir Putin's 2005 Annual Address to the Federal Assembly. As if reiterating Catherine the Great's famous dictum, Putin forcefully asserted that "Above all else Russia was, is and will, of course, be a major European power."

> Achieved through much suffering by European culture, the ideals of freedom, human rights, justice and democracy have for many centuries been our society's determining values. For three centuries, we – together with the other European nations – passed hand in hand through reforms of Enlightenment, the difficulties of emerging parliamentarianism, municipal and judiciary branches, and the establishment of similar legal systems… I repeat we did this together, sometimes behind and sometimes ahead of European standards.[53]

Such stance, naturally, implies that Europe should be held to *Russian* standards of Europeanness, too. So when Moscow castigates the "rehabilitation of fascism" in certain parts of Europe or lashes out at the "glorification of Nazi collaborators" in some Baltic states or in Ukraine, it claims it protects *European* values – the ones that the EU itself allegedly chose to ignore. Thus Russian leadership's jeremiads against the "inadmissible revision of WWII results" should be read as an element of its strategic ideological ambition to advance an alternative interpretation of what *Europe* means.[54]

There is also a very important domestic dimension of Russian leadership's struggle against the "revision of World War II history." Here, a myth of the "Great Patriotic War" or, more precisely, a myth of the "great Victory" plays a pivotal role. Created in the 1960s, this myth – in which the memory of *war* with all its unbearable everyday hardships, untold number of victims, millions of POWs, chaos of evacuation, etc., had been replaced by the memory of *victory* -- was successfully exploited by the Soviet Communist rulers.[55] First, it pro-

53 Vladimir Putin, *Annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation*, The Kremlin, Moscow, 25 April 2005, http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2005/04/25/2031_type70029type82912_87086.shtml

54 For a discussion of this issue, see Richard Sakwa, "Russia and Turkey: Rethinking Europe to Contest Outsider Status," *Russie.Nei.Visions*, no. 51 (May 2010), http://www.ifri.org/?page=contribution-detail&id=6065&id_provenance=97

55 See Thomas C. Wolfe, "Past as Present, Myth, or History? Discourses of Time and the Great Fatherland War," in Lebow et al., *The Politics of Memory*; Amir Weiner,

vided an effective means of legitimization for the political power. Second, it was a powerful instrument of identity politics as it told an uplifting story of a "birth of the Soviet people in the crucible of the total war."[56]

Since the Soviet collapse, however, both the rulers and the Russian public at large have found themselves in a tight spot: while the former were facing the crisis of legitimacy, the latter was experiencing the crisis of identity. The Yeltsin regime, particularly in its early years, sought to build both its legitimacy and Russian identity on the idea of "democratization" and "joining the civilized world." During the Putin "fat decade" of energy revenues' windfall, the cornerstone of legitimacy and identity building was seemingly apolitical – the *narod* was encouraged to "get rich" and swap political freedoms for the unbridled freedom to consume. Yet by the mid-1990s, one could perceive a gradual return to the concept of Great Russia – a country that remains a great power throughout all the trials and tribulations of its turbulent history. This image inevitably entails an evocation of epic struggles with powerful and perfidious foes from which Russia would emerge triumphant under the stern leadership of strong and benevolent rulers. In this sense, the officially peddled myth of the "great Victory" becomes an indispensable tool for the reconstruction of Russian identity.

Making Sense of War: The Second World War and the Fate of the Bolshevik Revolution (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); A useful work based on the analysis of personal accounts is Catherine Merridale, *Ivan's War: The Red Army 1939-45* (London: Faber, 2005).

56 In fact, Geoffrey Hosking argues that during the war period the Soviets nearly succeeded in forging a new identity – a notion of (Soviet) "nationness" based on the feeling of Russianness that is held by most Russians and non-Russians alike: "We may say that during 1941-1945 "Russianness" crystallized in that way, as an ethnic amalgam, a blend of *russki*, *rossiiskii*, and Soviet elements. In 1945 the USSR was closer to being a compound neo-*rossiiskii* nation-state than ever before – or, as it turned out, ever after." "[T]he *russkii* and *rossiiski* had largely coalesced and this coalescence took the form of the *sovetskii*. …People from all nationalities… saw that legitimacy [of a Soviet state] as grounded in the recent victory, in the USSR's super power status, and in the momentous project of building Communism, not just for the Soviet peoples, but ultimately for the exploited and oppressed of the whole world." See Geoffrey Hosking, *Rulers and Victims: The Russians in the Soviet Union* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Belknap Press, 2006): 210, 226. For a more general discussion on how warfare contributes to the creation of the nation as a "sacred community of sacrifice," see John Hutchinson, "Warfare and the Sacralisation of Nations: The Meanings, Rituals and Politics of National Remembrance," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 38, no. 2 (2009).

The official commemoration of the "Great Patriotic War" also appears to be the sole ideological mechanism that can be employed to foster Russia's social cohesion. According to the Carnegie Moscow Center analyst Nikolai Petrov, "There is absolutely nothing else in the whole of Russian history that can be used to unite the nation."[57] Petrov's remark is significant in that it reveals what arguably constitutes Russia's most formidable "historiographical" problem – namely, the lack of even a minimal consensus within the Russian society as to the interpretation of the country's turbulent past, following the century of violent political upheavals. To achieve a healthy degree of cohesion, within any society there should be a certain public agreement as to the basic values system upon which rests the whole edifice of historical memory of the given society. After all, any "memorial construct" is a system of values; the "memory as such" simply does not exist. As the Russians fail to agree on how to treat the most significant episodes of their country's past, the "Victory myth" is being used by the ruling elites as a kind of "social glue."[58]

Treating the "Great Patriotic War" as a "usable past" also fits into a broader strategy of "normalizing" Soviet history which has been vigorously pursued under Putin. "Normalization" of the Soviet past as a "part of our glorious thousand year old history" contributes to the revived ideology of statism as a perennial source of Russian identity.[59]

Integrating the Stalin period into a greater Russian story is not just an elite project -- the polls demonstrate that it is generally supported by the masses. For the West in general and Russia's Eastern European neighbors in particu-

57 Roland Oliphant, "No Doubt Allowed," *Russia Profile*, 21 May 2009.

58 The best-selling British military historian and author of *Stalingrad*, Antony Beevor, recently recalled how he was reprimanded by the top Russian official for what was perceived as the "blackening" of Russia's victory in Beevor's latest volume, *Berlin: The Downfall 1945*. Beevor's recounting of the mass rapes committed by the Red Army in Germany sparked controversy in Russia. "As the Russian ambassador pointed out to me," Beevor told the *Financial Times*, "'You've got to understand -- the victory [over Germany] is *sacred*.'" See York Membery, "In the War Room," *Financial Times*, 12-13 February 2011.

59 As Thomas Sherlock has perceptively noted, under Putin, a new "forceful narrative" was being constructed "whose central theme was the organic connection among the tsarist, communist, and postcommunist periods, with the Russian state as the unifying element." See Thomas Sherlock, *Historical Narratives in the Soviet Union and Post-Soviet Russia: Destroying the Settled Past, Creating an Uncertain Future* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007): 161.

lar, the process appears both puzzling and menacing: increasingly, there is talk about Moscow's backlash and imperial comeback. There is, however, a compelling psychological reason for the rise of such public attitudes, and some more astute commentators contended that a backlash in one form or another was inevitable. One has to understand, notes Judt, that for the majority of Russians, the demise of the Soviet Union involved the loss of not just territory and status but also of a *history* that they could live with. "Everything has been unraveled before their eyes," says he, adding that any other nation would have been morally devastated by such an experience.

> If this had happened to Americans, or Brits, it would have been culturally catastrophic; to lose the equivalent of, say Texas and California, to be told that all the founding fathers right down to FDR were a bunch of criminals, to discover that you are regarded as on the par with Hitler, in terms of the accepted description of 20th-century evils that we have since overcome.[60]

No wonder, then, that the "trope of loss," as Serguei Oushakine demonstrates so well in his *The Patriotism of Despair*, has become the most effective and widely used symbolic device which Russians employ to make sense of their Soviet experience in the post-Soviet context.[61]

There is, of course, a vexed question about the interrelation between the glory of the "Great Patriotic War" and the horrors of Stalinist terror.[62] Some liberal

60 "Interview with Historian Tony Judt."

61 Serguei Oushakine, *The Patriotism of Despair: Nation, War and Loss in Russia* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2009). As Vladimir Putin famously stated, "We should acknowledge that the collapse of the Soviet Union was a major geopolitical disaster of the century. As for the Russian nation, it became a genuine drama." (See Putin's 2005 Annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation at http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2005/04/25/2031_type70029type82912_87086.shtml) Thus, "it was the shared memory of loss, along with the firsthand experience of living through the *berspredel* of the 1990s," argues Oushakine, "that ensured the widespread positive reception of this revitalized patriotism in postmillenarian Russia." See Oushakine, *The Patriotism of Despair*, 7.

62 The problem of reconciling "Stalin the Victor" and "Stalin the Villain" appears not to be unique to Russia. Recent historical scholarship in Great Britain, for example, raises the issue of the uncomfortable co-existence of "two Churchills:" the one who led Britain through its finest hour and the other one who was hell-bent on preserving a raw white supremacy throughout the British Empire – even at the cost of establishing a concentration camp network of his own. For a learned and well documented

Russian scholars have skillfully demonstrated how the memory of the war is being (ab)used to construct a kind of "blocking myth" in order to suppress the memories of the totalitarian regime's terror, of the Gulag and other crimes of the period. If the atrocities perpetrated by the Soviet regime do occasionally pop up in the official narrative, they are presented as some insignificant episode in the otherwise heroic and glorious Soviet history.[63] But one also must bear in mind the existence of significant differences in the ways the trauma of the Soviet collapse affected public perceptions and memories of Russians and those of their neighbors in Eastern Europe: "In Russia itself, the disintegration of the USSR was linked much more closely with the painful immediacy of everyday survival than with archived horrors of the Great Terror… The need to equate the Soviet Union with the Stalinist regime, which was so crucial for many Western [and East European] commentators, was less obvious in the midst of [Russia's] post-Soviet changes."[64]

And yet, the ambiguity of a Russian official position, rooted in the inability of making a comprehensive and honest assessment of the nature of the Soviet regime, makes it extremely difficult for Moscow to approach the crucial issue of responsibility that appears to be at the heart of history wars in the post-Soviet space.

Warring Histories and the Question of Responsibility

Remarkably, while arguing for the need to craft Russian "historical doctrine," the lawmaker Kosachev has correctly defined the core reason of Russia's current predicament: it lies, he notes, in the simple fact that the present-day Russia is a legal successor to the Soviet Union. He also notes, again correctly, that this legal continuity involves both positive and negative implications. But then, when he spells out the key points of his "historical doctrine," he

---

discussion of this issue, see Richard Toye, *Churchill's Empire: The World That Made Him and the World He Made* (London: Macmillan, 2010).

63 See Dina Khapaeva, "Historical Memory in Post-Soviet Gothic Society," *Social Research* 76, no. 1 (Spring 2009); idem, *Goticheskoe obshchestvo: Morfologiya koshmara* (Moscow: NLO, 2007); idem, "Goticheskoe obshchestvo," *Kriticheskaya massa*, no.1 (2006). See critique of Khapaeva's discussion in: Mikhail Gabovich, "Kollektivnaya pamyat' i individual'naya otvetstvennost': Zametki po povodu stat'i Diny Khapaevoi," *Neprikosnovenny zapas*, no. 6 (2006).

64 Oushakine, *The Patriotism of Despair*, 80.

takes on a markedly contradictory stance. Russia, Kosachev suggests, can carry on as the USSR's successor state but is not responsible – politically, morally, financially or otherwise – for any criminal acts committed by the Soviet regime.

But this stance is untenable. As some leading scholars (such as, for instance, Andrei Zubov) have long pointed out, the issue of legal continuity is the crux of the matter and this is exactly what differentiates Russia from all other countries of Eastern Europe.[65] While in 1991 Russia chose to become, in legal terms, the continuation of the USSR, all ex-communist countries of Eastern Europe (including some former Soviet republics) opted to reestablish historical continuity with their pre-communist state entities. Thus, if today's Russia is a direct successor of the Soviet state – the fact all Russia's ruling bodies willingly accept – then it bears full responsibility for the actions and crimes committed by the Soviet regime against both its own people and foreign citizens throughout that regime's entire history.

The correlation between Russia's legal continuity and historical responsibility remains a hotly contested issue even within the liberal segment of Russia's scholarly community. As Valery Tishkov, Director of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology at the Russian Academy of Sciences, has passionately argued recently, "Russia's being a legal successor [to the USSR] in terms of external debt, property abroad or international agreements does not mean that, say, my relatives from the Urals who were victims of Stalinist repressions and I as their descendant bear responsibility for the grave errors or criminal policies pursued by the Soviet ruling clique that to a significant extent consisted of the migrants from Georgia and Ukraine." Yet Tishkov does agree that the "problem of [Russia's] historical responsibility in all its aspects merits a new discussion."[66] However, within the Russian liberal milieu there is a more subtle and nuanced understanding of responsibility than the one suggested by Tishkov. The proponents of this understanding talk not so much of "historical guilt" as of the "civic responsibility for the country's past." This

65 See Andrei Zubov, "It Is Time to Declare the Soviet Union Illegal," *Moscow Times*, 27 July 2010; idem, "Vostochnoevropeiskii i postsovetskii puti vozvrashcheniya k plyuralisticheskoi gosudarstvennosti," Polit.ru, 8 October 2009, http://www.polit.ru/lectures/2009/10/08/zubov_print.html.

66 Valery Tishkov, "Istoriya i istoriki: vlast' stereotipov," *Strategiya Rossii*, no. 8 (2010).

means that contemporary Russians are not literally "guilty" of the crimes committed during the Soviet rule, but that they have accepted the inheritance and, along with it, all its debts. Without this moral act, the argument proceeds, any civic responsibility for the present and the future is simply unthinkable.[67] The unwillingness of official Moscow to even discuss this issue – which Kosachev's proposal unambiguously declares – will only raise the suspicions among Russia's neighbors.

Yet even more important, of course, is the issue of Russia's own identity. Back in 1991, Russia, too, had two options: to reestablish legal continuity with the 1917 pre-revolutionary Russia or choose to become a legal successor to the USSR. The choice, as is well known, was made in favor of the second option. Although some commentators hold that "it is unlikely that those who took this decision really understood the consequences,"[68] Boris Yeltsin appeared to have understood (if only post factum) the difference between the two options as well as the possible implications. In his memoirs, having explained the reasons for the actual choice that the Russian leadership made at the time, he then mused about what might have happened had the Russian Federation chosen to become a successor to the pre-revolutionary Russia: "Now I think to myself, what kind of Russia would we be living in had we chosen another path, if we had revived the legal succession of pre-Soviet Russia

67 See the round-table discussion "Kak zavershit' istoriyu SSSR," Polit.ru, 24 April 2008, http://www.polit.ru/analytics/2008/04/24/istpamat_print.html. Such a stance is clearly influenced by the reflections of Karl Jaspers on the "question of German guilt" in his celebrated 1946 essay "Die Schuldfrage." In this work, Jaspers famously discussed the four categories of guilt. In *legal* sense, only he who committed concrete criminal acts is guilty, and this guilt should be proved in the court of law. No collective guilt could exist in such situation. However, *all* German citizens who lived under Nazi regime are *politically* guilty, even those who considered themselves apolitical or were the opponents of Nazism. Since they accepted the political system established by the National Socialists, they bear the collective political responsibility vis-à-vis the community of peoples. In terms of *moral* guilt, there are huge differences between those Germans who were adults during the Nazi era. The issue of whether one is morally guilty or not is decided individually, on the basis of individual conscience. And finally, Jaspers contends, there is a *metaphysical* guilt which is a "lack of absolute solidarity with people as people." The experience of metaphysical guilt can and should change our self-consciousness. But no one can charge the other with such an experience – it is only God who can decide in this matter. See Karl Jaspers, *The Question of German Guilt* (New York: The Dial Press, 1947).

68 Boris Dolgin, "Russia's History Wars," *Open Democracy*, 22 May 2009, http://www.opendemocracy.net/russia/article/Russias-history-wars.

— the Russia that the Bolsheviks destroyed in 1917." Russia, Yeltsin suggested, would have become a different country, living according to different set of laws that would give priority to personality and not to the state: "We could have lived according to completely different rules — not by the Soviet principles of class struggle … but by laws and principles that respect individual rights." "It would have been a bold step to admit our historical mistakes and restore the country's historical succession," Yeltsin asserted and then added, tellingly: "The outside world would have treated us differently too."[69]

Russia's first president was right on the mark. Nothing undermines trust and sours the relations between Russia and its neighbors more than the reluctance of Russian policy elite to fully come to terms with the Soviet past, recognize the crimes of Stalinist regime and acknowledge all the wrongs it did both to Russian people and the other peoples of the former USSR and Eastern Europe. Kosachev and other Russian politicians argue that the Kremlin leadership has already condemned Stalinism and, besides, Russia is one of its many victims. Indeed, certain liberal-minded segments of Russia's political leadership who are interested in the strengthening of their country's ties with the West seem to have embarked on their own, as yet rather feeble, de-Stalinization campaign.[70] In an apparent attempt to politically mend fences with Poland, the Russian Duma officially recognized that the Katyn crime -- the execution in 1940 of about 22,000 Poles by the Soviet security police -- was committed on direct order by Stalin and other Soviet leaders. Prior to this unprecedented statement, the Polish film "Katyn" was shown on Russian television, and President Dmitry Medvedev, on his visit to Warsaw last September, awarded the Order of Friendship to Andrzej Wajda, the film's celebrated director.[71]

69 Boris Yeltsin, *Presidentskii marafon* (Moscow: AST, 2000): 196-197. The English-language version of these memoirs is: Boris Yeltsin, *Midnight Diaries*; translated by Catherine A. Fitzpatrick (New York: Public Affairs, 2000).

70 Masha Lipman, "The Third Wave of Russian De-Stalinization," *Foreign Policy*, 16 December 2010.

71 Judy Dempsey, "Old Foes See Reasons to Get Along," *International Herald Tribune*, 9 December 2010; Dmitry Trenin, "Rossiya i Pol'sha: druzhba, kotoraya ne dolzhna provalit'sya. K vizitu Dmitriya Medvedeva v Varshavu," Polit.ru, 6 December 2010, http://www.polit.ru/institutes/2010/12/06/poland_print.html.

But these declarations are definitely not enough. Russian human rights activists have long asserted that in Russia, the memory of Stalinism is invariably a memory of *victims* but not of the committed *crime*. Twenty years after the end of Communist rule, there isn't even one legislative act in which the state terror would be unequivocally characterized as crime.[72] Nowhere is it stated that the extra-judicial bodies created during the Soviet period were a bad thing: since they were formed on the orders of the supreme organs of the Soviet power, they are deemed to be perfectly legal. As a result, Russia finds itself in a vicious circle. Without the legal assessment of the crimes committed by the Soviet regime it is impossible to advance public education based on the liberal values, but the present-day Russian authorities are reluctant to pass a legal judgment on the Stalinist misdeeds.[73]

Some more enlightened members of the Russian elite, however, appear to clearly see where the problem lies. It is rooted, the chairman of Russia's influential Council on Foreign and Defense Policy Sergei Karaganov states bluntly, in "the legacy of Soviet socialism" – that is, "Stalinism" and its consequences. In his recent essay published in the government newspaper under the telltale title "A Russian Katyn," Karaganov argues that, so far, Russians "have not found in themselves the strength to recognize that *all Russia is one large Katyn*" filled with "the nameless graves of millions of victims of the regime" that ruled over the Soviet Union for most of the last century.[74] "Over the past year," Karaganov noted,

> both the president and prime minister have condemned Stalinism. And all the same, we have not dared to fully reject its inheritance, to repent for the outrages committed by us and our ancestors over ourselves and our own people. …Without bowing before the victims of Stalinism and without recognizing the guilt of their own country before them, we will remain inheritors only of another part of our people – their executioners,

72 See Arsenii Roginsky, *Pamyat' o stalinizme: Doklad na konferentsii "Istoriya stalinizma"* (Moscow, 5 December 2008), http://www.boell.ru/downloads/pamiat_o_stalinizme.pdf.

73 Anatoly M. Khazanov and Stanley G. Payne, "How to Deal with the Past?" *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 9, no. 2-3 (2008).

74 Sergei Karaganov, "Russkaya Katyn," *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 22 July 2010. Emphasis added.

> guards, and snitches, of those who voluntarily de-kulakized [the country] and destroyed the churches.[75]

Remarkably, Karaganov has made a direct link between Russia's inability to face up to its "dark past" and the country's international image: "The anti-Russian sentiment is strong also because we ourselves are unable to part with the worst in our history." This is what Russia's liberal scholars and rights activists have been arguing for years. But such a statement, coming from a person of Karaganov's stature and appearing in a government daily, becomes significant.[76] It appears to indicate that, although in today's Russia there is no open and nation-wide discussion of the country's unpalatable past comparable to the famous *Historikerstreit* in Germany in the 1980s,[77] the acute struggle over the interpretation of history does take place even within the establishment. This largely internal struggle accounts for the seemingly contradic-

75 *Ibid.*

76 Remarkably, the 2010 session of the Valdai Discussion Club -- a forum co-founded in 2004 by RIA Novosti and Russia's Council on Foreign and Defense Policy which brings together Russian and foreign scholars, journalists and public intellectuals -- was devoted to discussing the topic of "Russia's history and future development." Some Russian participants have forcefully argued that "without a full realization of Russia's horrific past, without both figuratively and physically burying Lenin, Russia cannot move forward." See Andrei Zolotov Jr., "The Storm of History," *Russia Profile*, 8 September 2010; Anatol Lieven, "Reexamining Russian History," *National Interest*, 15 September 2010.

77 Unlike in Germany, the community of professional historians in Russia has not yet evolved into a genuine "expert corporation" that enjoys the trust of the Russian society. As some commentators note – to my mind, correctly – in today's Russia, the institutional conditions for the independent scholarly expertise and analysis are still lacking. Indeed, at bottom, institutions are norms and rules; the latter, however, cannot be abided by in the absence of trust. In a polity where people question (and for good reasons at that) the trustworthiness of the courts, the existence of the independent scholarly expertise, the ability of the professional community to pass an unbiased judgment, the possibility of holding an unrestrained discussion in the mainstream mass media as well as the very search for truth appear to be problematic. Yet in lieu of the full-blooded *Historikerstreit*, over the last decade Russia did see three big debates on history textbooks: the "Dolutsky affair," the "Filippov affair," and the "Vdovin-Barsenkov affair." On the "Filippov affair," see the articles by David Brandenberger ("A New *Short Course*? A.V. Filippov and the Russian State's Search for a 'Usable Past'"), Boris Mironov ("The Fruits of a Bourgeois Education"), Vladimir Solonari ("Normalizing Russia, Legitimizing Putin") and Elena Zubkova ("The Filippov Syndrome") in *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 10, no. 4 (2009). Also of interest are Nikita Sokolov, "Vek surka, ili Kratkaya istoriya kolovrashcheniya rossiiskikh uchebnikov istorii," Polit.ru, 15 October 2008, http://www.polit.ru/analytics/2008/10/15/history_print.html; Dmitry Babich, "Stalin's Methods Revived," *Russia Profile*, 22 September 2010.

tory moves that the Russian authorities are making. Notably, President Medvedev who signed the infamous decree on the creation of the "commission against falsifications of history," appointed last October Mikhail Fedotov, previously head of Russia's liberal-leaning Union of Journalists, the Kremlin's top human rights advisor. Upon his appointment, Fedotov wasted no time to declare his sweeping de-Stalinization agenda. Russia has no future, he argued, unless it can overcome its totalitarian mindset and understand the full scale of Stalin's repressions. He further contended that Russia's Soviet legacy was inextricably linked with its main problems such as corruption and lack of press freedom. He also announced that he would soon present Medvedev with a package of proposals to eradicate "totalitarian thinking."[78] This was apparently done at the meeting of the Council on Civil Society and Human Rights in Yekaterinburg on February 1, 2011, which was attended by President Medvedev. There a group of liberal intellectuals headed by Karaganov and Arseny Roginsky, head of Memorial, announced the launch of an ambitious project titled "On the Perpetuation of the Memory of the Victims of the Totalitarian Regime and on National Reconciliation." This project, which should become a "mass movement for restoring historical memory and justice," is aimed at no less than the radical transformation of the consciousness of both Russian society and the Russian elite.

Remarkably, what is at stake, according to the project's leaders, is the (re)creation of a *new Russian identity*, without which, they contend, "progress will be impossible."[79] The direct link that is made between de-Stalinization and the forging of Russia's new post-Soviet identity is instructive. Drawing on the German postwar lessons, liberal-minded Russian intellectuals and political thinkers argue that, like the de-Nazification and the campaign of the collective guilt in Germany following the Nazi era, the ideology and politics of de-Stalinization should become an instrument of the thorough reforming of Russia's political and social system. For Russia, this de-Stalinization agenda is both urgent and strategic as it should constitute, according to one comment,

78 Thomas Grove, "Russia Must Exorcise Stalin's Legacy – Kremlin Aide," *Reuters*, 6 December 2010.

79 See the speeches by Karaganov and Roginsky at the February 1, 2011 Yekaterinburg meeting of the Council on Civil Society and Human Rights in *Stenograficheskii otchet o zasedanii Soveta po razvitiyu grazhdanskogo obshchestva i pravam cheloveka*, http://news.kremlin.ru/transcripts/10194.

an important aspect of the country's "new identity, new 'national idea,' if you wish."[80] Ultimately, a new social norm should take root that would reject excessive violence and the primacy of the state interests over those of the individual and instead uphold the principles of tolerance, compromise, and societal dialogue. As a result, Russia's entire political culture will have been transformed. It would appear, though, that Russia is in for a long haul. The country's elites seem to be divided over the kind of identity they wish for Russia: either that of a *derzhava* that bosses around in its geopolitical backyard or that of a law-governed European state in peace with its neighbors. Thus Russia's contradictory "politics of history" is likely to continue. If anything, President Medvedev, judging by his remarks at the Yekaterinburg meeting of the Human Rights Council, was not terribly impressed by the proposals advanced by a group of Russian liberal thinkers. He reiterated that both he as president and Russian parliament have already made political statements with regard to Stalinist period and its crimes, while it is up to the courts to pass any legal ruling in these matters. So it's unclear, he argued, what else could be done here.[81] On the other hand, Russian public attitudes also indicate that there is an uphill struggle ahead. According to the 2009 survey of the Levada Center, Russia's well-respected independent pollster, around 49 percent of Russians believe that Stalin played a largely positive role in the country's history, while only 33 percent hold that he was a negative historical figure.[82] In a sense, suggest the liberal political analyst Kirill Rogov, Russia "finds itself in a situation similar to the one that West Germany experienced in the beginning of the 1950s, when seven years after the destruction of Hitler's Third Reich and the actual completion of de-Nazification campaign it tuned out that Nazism had remained part of the national political consciousness, and one third of Germans were ready to justify it one way or the other."[83]

80 Kirill Rogov, "Destalinizatsiya: Muzei na Lubyanke," *Vedomosti*, 4 February 2011.
81 *Stenograficheskii otchet*.
82 Rogov, "Destalinizatsiya."
83 Ibidem. There is, however, a remarkable sign of more salubrious winds blowing in Russian historiography -- a recent publication of the two-volume textbook of Russian modern history *Istoriya Rossii. XX vek* (Moscow: AST, 2009), edited by Andrei Zubov. Three features distinguish this landmark study: it rejects the traditional statist approach by putting individual at the center of the narrative and by striving to present the history of society rather than the history of the state; it rejects the traditional stance of "wounded nationalism" that used to invariably portray Russia as a victim of

Conclusion

Is it realistic to believe that post-Soviet states will ever do without politics of history and that the memory wars between them will eventually end? I would begin discussion of this question by suggesting that while national images of the past will never fully coincide, it appears feasible to reach some reconciliation between them and thus avoid creating negative identities. Such reconciliation can be achieved in the course of a broad and mutually respectful dialogue between national memories and historical narratives. All the participants of this dialogue would agree that while national memories are not congruent and historical narratives might diverge, one's image of the past could only be enriched through the knowledge of alternative interpretations.

Such dialogue, however, will only be possible if three formidable obstacles are overcome. The most important obstacle is authoritarian political culture. As Karl Schlögel argues, "Authoritarian conditions are hostile to memory. A mature historical culture and a civil culture belong together."[84] Indeed, scholars have noted the close correlation between regime type and the degree of regime's reliance on historical myths.[85] True, all regimes resort to and rely on myth-making. But in liberal democracies, political legitimacy is much less dependent on the unifying historical narrative that would foster compliance with government policies than it is in authoritarian regimes. Genuine democracies are thus much more tolerant of dissent, controversy, competing ideas and can afford the luxury of treating history that challenges habitual assumptions with

---

foreign aggression; and it rejects the traditional aversion to using foreign accounts. Significantly, it also offers a very untraditional interpretation of World War II: eschewing the use of the symbolically laden term "the Great Patriotic War," the authors suggest a more neutral one – "the Soviet-Nazi war," arguing that the conflict, which started as the war between the two regimes, then evolved into the war between the two peoples. *Istoriya Rossii* has been received with glowing reviews in the West (see, for example, Richard Pipes, "A New Russian History That's Sensational for the Right Reasons," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 5 December 2009). Far more important, though, is that the book was supported by some more liberal members of the Russian elite. See Sergei Karaganov, "Drugaya nasha istoriya," *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, 19 March 2010.

84 Karl Schlögel, "Places and Strata of Memory: Approaches to Eastern Europe," *Eurozine*, 19 December 2008, http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2008-12-19-schlogel-en.html.

85 See Sherlock, *Historical Narratives*, 1-27.

relative equanimity. This trait, in the words of the eminent British historian Michael Howard, is a mark of maturity. By contrast, authoritarian leaders prefer to feed their subjects with what Howard calls "nursery history." In his view, "[A] good definition of the difference between a Western liberal society and a totalitarian one – whether it is Communist, Fascist, or Catholic authoritarian – is that in the former the government treats its citizens as responsible adults and in the latter it cannot."[86]

The second problem is the widespread perceptions that mass publics hold about what history actually is. Sociological surveys demonstrate that in most post-Soviet states, people are largely unaware of one fundamental thing -- that studying history is a complex and continuous process in the course of which what used to be perceived as "historical truth" can (and should) be refuted as new evidence emerge or new interpretations are advanced. According to the recent data provided by VTsIOM, a Russian pollster, 60 percent of the respondents hold that history should not be revised, that past events should be studied in such a way which would exclude "repeat research" leading to new approaches and interpretations. Only 31 percent of those polled believe that the study of history is a continuous and open-ended process. Furthermore, 79 percent spoke in favour of using one single textbook when teaching history course in schools – lest the young minds get confused by alternative interpretations. Symptomatically, 78 percent supported the creation of the presidential commission charged with fighting "falsification of history," and 60 percent said the passing of a "memory law" criminalizing the "revision of WWII results" would be a good thing. Ironically, when 61 percent of Russians say that "national interpretations" of the past are inadmissible, they appear to be oblivious of the fact that their own interpretation is no less "national."[87]

86 MacMillan, *Dangerous Games*, 39.

87 See "Boyazn' proshlogo," *Vedomosti*, 22 October 2009. In all fairness, such attitudes are by no means limited to Russia and the post-Soviet lands. History wars in the US and in a number of other Western countries, notes the American historian Eric Foner, "did underscore the basic differences between historians' understanding of their task and what much of the broader public thinks the writing of history entails. Historians view the constant search for new perspectives as the lifeblood of historical understanding. Outside the academy, however, the act of reinterpretation is often viewed with suspicion, and 'revisionist' is invoked as a term of abuse." See Foner, *Who Owns History?*, xvi.

This picture of public attitudes should correct an oversimplified perception of symbolic politics in the post-Soviet lands as basically a one-way street whereby the discourse that serves the interests of ruling elites is being imposed upon society. In more ways than one, the prevalent attitudes toward history and memory demonstrate the meeting of the minds between the rulers and the ruled in Eurasia.

It would appear that these attitudes can be changed only slowly through the changes in the way national histories are written in Russia and other ex-Soviet republics. And this is the third big problem that needs to be tackled. It would be naïve to believe that national governments (or die-hard nationalists, for that matter) will one day stop regarding (and exploiting) historical narrative as a useful means of nationalist mobilization. After all, common history is what holds the imagined community together. So an ethnic-centric, "nationalized" history is likely to persist. But what is needed, assert some leading historians, is to supplement a traditional national narrative by *multiethnic* or, better still, *transnational* approach. "Transnational" or "transcultural" history, argues Andreas Kappeler, would be based on "multiperspectivity and comparison, investigate interactions, communications and overlapping phenomena and entanglements between states, nations, societies, economies, regions, and cultures."[88]

These new approaches would probably still not help overcome the divide between memories in the post-Soviet world. But as I stated above, there is no need to try bridging the gap between national memories. This goal is unattainable. The objective to be pursued is much more modest: to promote understanding of other perspectives and interpretations.

88 Andreas Kappeler, "From an Ethnonational to a Multiethnic to a Transnational Ukrainian History" in Georgiy Kasianov and Philipp Ther, eds., *A Laboratory of Transnational History: Ukraine and Recent Ukrainian Historiography* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2009): 63-64.

3 Negotiating History

Memory Wars in the Near Abroad and the Pro-Kremlin Youth Movements

Marlène Laruelle, George Washington University

Russian society is a fragmented society in terms of living standards, contacts with the external world, access to information, and political and identity perceptions. It has very few elements with which to create a social bond or an ideological consensus. Against this background, the memory of the Second World War plays a key role as a driver of historical consensus. Polls conducted on this question are very revealing: in 1998, 70% of Russian citizens considered the victory of 1945 to be the most important event of the 20th century, and today that figure has reached 90%.[1] Russian public opinion is also broadly unanimous concerning the notion that the neighboring post-Soviet states blame Russia for all their evils and tend to undermine the Soviet version of twentieth-century history. Since the second half of the 2000s, political tensions have heightened around questions of memory and their weight in relations between post-Communist states, in particular in the Russia-Ukraine-Baltic countries-Poland regions—one of the zones most marked by the violence of the Second World War *and* the brutal (re)Sovietization that followed.

Memory stakes also occupy a key place in the strategies of pro-presidential youth movements as they bid to establish youth identities that are both contestatory *and* recognized by the political authorities and public opinion. This is particularly so of *Nashi*, the group that forms the basis of this analysis (though not exclusively). Youth activists have no personal, direct memory of the So-

1 Lev Gudkov, "Istoriia v soznanii *Nashi*kh grazhdan ostaetsia sovetskoi," *Novye izvestiia*, October 19, 2010, http://www.newizv.ru/news/2010-10-19/135152/ (accessed January 14, 2011).

viet past; instead, their identity is shaped by a more global cultural context; it is received through textbooks, films, media, official, and familial narratives. They thereby advance a mimetic and consensual interpretation of these memory wars, one that is in sync with the mainstream, and simultaneously give off an image of themselves as bearers of a specific youth counter-culture that is critical of the older generations. Two central references have made it possible to gain this paradoxical place in society, references which elicit near total unanimity from public opinion and the ruling elites in Russia: first, the remembrance of the Great Patriotic War; and second, the commitment to the struggle against the so-called falsifications of history by neighboring states.

This article examines the role played by the memory wars in structuring some of the youth movements. These wars have provided the movements in question with a recognized status in society, and endowed their members with specific identity logics. The article aims to discuss the focus of these memory wars on the Near Abroad and the high-level politicization of the youth historical debates. In conclusion, the article inquires into the stakes of Russia's Europeanness for the youth movements, the role of historical narrative in creating powerful mechanisms of mobilization, the political dependency of movements claiming youth autonomy, and the absence of ideological and organizational barriers between both the official and the more radical movements.[2] This work was begun in 2008 and is part of a several year-long research project on youth politicization and youth memory about the Soviet Union. The studies are based on interviews with youth activists as well as on observer participation in their activities. To date fieldwork has been conducted in Moscow, St Petersburg, Petrozavodsk, and Vladivostok.

"Managed Democracy," Managed History

(a) Public Memories or Public Memory? Combating a Pluralism of Remembrance

What is clear when it comes to the symbols of the Russian state (hymn, wreath, etc.), official commemorations, and public discourses, is that the positive reassessment of the Soviet past has been especially blatant since Vladi-

2 I would like to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their very useful comments.

mir Putin's arrival in power. The process at work here, however, had already begun in the second half of the 1990s.[3] While the perestroika years were enlivened by very contradictory debates on Soviet history, in the 2000s the accent shifted to the victory of the Second World War, with Stalin's repressions being discretely left to one side. During Putin's second mandate (2004-2008), the state tried to tighten its control over the memory debates and silence dissident voices. In 2005, at the 60th anniversary of the victory of 1945, a first memory policy was outlined when Putin stated out loud what most Russians actually thought but did not say, namely that "the collapse of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century."[4]

In the following year, media sources close to the authorities and several official figures ferociously denounced the so-called falsifiers of history, who, allegedly financed by the West, had dared to discuss or qualify the Soviet contribution to the Second World War. They encouraged historians to write "objective" school textbooks, the epitome of which is that by Filipov, published in 2007, in which statism is defended as a major axis of Russian history, and Stalinist crimes are excused in the name of the need to modernize the Soviet Union.[5] In 2008, Memorial's documents were seized by the authorities as Gleb Pavlovsky, long the Kremlin's primary image-maker, accused the organization of having the self-assigned goal of shaping public memory in Russia and of spreading a distorted view of national history, and in particular of Stalinism.[6]

The authorities' desire to exert their influence on historical narratives accelerated in 2009. The Minister of Emergency Situations, and an important figure of United Russia, Sergey Shoigu, suggested that it should be considered

3 Marlene Laruelle, *In the Name of the Nation: Nationalism and Politics in contemporary Russia* (New York: Palgrave/MacMillan, 2009), pp. 120-125.

4 Vladimir V. Putin, "Poslanie Federal'nomu Sobraniiu Rossiiskoi Federatsii," *Kremlin.ru*, April 25, 2005, http://www.kremlin.ru/appears/2005/04/25/1223_type63372type63374type82634_87049.shtml (accessed November 12, 2007).

5 David Wedgwood Benn, "The Teaching of History in Present-Day Russia," *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 62, no. 1 2010, pp. 173-177, Miguel Vázquez Liñán, "History as a propaganda tool in Putin's Russia," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, vol. 43, no. 2, 2010, pp. 167-178.

6 Irina Lagunina, "Ataki na Memorial i alternativnaia istoriia," *Svoboda.news.ru*, December 11, 2008, http://www.svobodanews.ru/content/Transcript/476699.html (accessed January 6, 2011).

criminal to criticize the Soviet victory. A few months later, the Regnum web portal announced that the presidential party's deputies would table a bill on history in the Duma to make provision for the creation of a civil tribunal to supervise the preservation of national memory and to make amendments to the penal code to punish, with three to five-year prison terms, any rehabilitations of Nazism, accusations made against the Allied Forces, or misrepresentations of the Nuremberg judgment.[7]

The bill's text included several ambiguities and inaccuracies, which probably partly explain why it was not put to a vote in the Parliament. In the first place, the bill aimed to be applicable not only to Russian citizens, but to all the citizens of the post-Soviet states as well, on the pretext that they were Soviet citizens on the day the conflict broke out on 22 June, 1941 – which is legally impossible. Second, it does not target worldwide revisionism, but focuses on relations with post-Soviet states, since the text seems to have been drafted by the Duma Committee for CIS affairs, led by Konstantin Zatulin, a close associate of the then Mayor of Moscow, Yuri Luzhkov, a figure well known for his virulence against Russia's "refractory" neighbors, namely, the Baltic countries, Ukraine, and Georgia. Third, the bill made a long reference to the Nuremberg trials, but Moscow's aim here seemed not to target discourses that deny its conclusions – since there exist only a few small extremist neo-Nazi groups that seek to rehabilitate the Nazi regime, and these groups are Russian as much as Baltic or Ukrainian – but instead those interpretations of 1945 that refute a Soviet victory. In addition, the Judgment reserves very harsh words for the German-Soviet pact of August 1939. Yet the Russian authorities are in denial on this issue, insofar as they are content to explain it as

7 Nikolay Kolosov, "The debate in Russia over the 'history' laws,", *Liberté pour l'histoire*, July 5, 2009, http://www.lph-asso.fr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=73%3Ale-debat-russe-sur-les-lois-memorielles&catid=31%3Adossier-russie&Itemid=78&lang=en (accessed January 6, 2011); Nikolay Kolosov, "Does Russia need a memory law?," *Open Democracy*, June 16, 2010, http://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/nikolai-koposov/does-russia-need-memory-law (accessed January 14, 2011).

a provisional, tactical maneuver, with the aim being simply to quash debate on WWII.[8]

This "memory" bill was ultimately not put to a vote of deputies, though a request to modify the penal code was, albeit unsuccessfully. On May 7, 2009, President Dmitri Medvedev announced on his blog his decision to create a "Commission to fight against falsifications of history to the detriment of Russia's interests." This Commission is currently led by the director of the Presidential Administration, Sergey Naryshkin. It contains 28 members, all of whom are appointed by the president, and only three of whom are well-placed historians with positions in the history institutes and archives of the Academy of Sciences. By comparison with those envisaged in the bill preceding it, however, the powers of the Commission are restricted.[9] In addition, no legal definition of the term "falsification" is given: the key element in the Commission's title is in fact not "falsification" *per se*, but actions done "to the detriment of Russia's interests." The Commission is therefore not designed to judge classical revisionism, such as that to be found in Western Europe (for example, denial of the gas chambers), but "misleading" interpretations of the victory of 1945.[10]

Faced with international and domestic criticism, Naryshkin defended the Commission by recalling that it did not target historical academic works and therefore played no censorship role. Its only task, he said, was to combat attempts to negate Russia's international prestige. Since its creation, however, the Commission has not displayed great activism, a telltale sign that it was essentially about creating a symbol, or an instrument that could be activated whenever the authorities deemed it necessary to have ideological legitimization for a political decision. However, the administrative pressures which have been put on associations such as Memorial, or on historians working on the Gulag, have been implemented via means other than those of the Commission. A case in point is the history professor at Arkhangelsk's university, Mik-

8 Nikolay Kolosov, "Istoriia i pravosudie. Kak istoricheskaia politika pytaetsia prikryt'sia Niurnbergom," *Polit.ru*, April 26, 2010, http://www.polit.ru/institutes/2010/04/26/koposov.html (accessed January 6, 2011).

9 Decree No. 549 "O Komissii pri Prezidente Rossiiskoi Federatsii po protivodeistviiu popytkam fal'sifikatsii istorii v ushcherb interesam Rossii."

10 Mikhail Zakharov, "Kommissia protiv istorii," *Polit.ru*, May 19, 2009, http://www.polit.ru/country/2009/05/19/history.html (accessed January 8, 2011).

hail Suprun, who was briefly arrested for having investigated the fate of Soviet Germans and German soldiers imprisoned in Arkhangelsk gulags.[11]

Attempts by the authorities to provide a single narrative about the WWII have become increasingly frequent and take multiple forms. The main targets are public commemorations, academic institutions, and museology. These attempts are, however, well received by the large majority of public opinion: about two-thirds of those surveyed consider it right that there be a single history textbook, are worried about the multiplication of contradictory narratives and their impact on the formation of the younger generations, and agree about the idea of pursuing those who "falsify" history with legal means.[12] This unanimity around the interpretation of WWII can be explained by the role that it plays in the post-Soviet social consensus in Russia. In the 1990s, whereas many elements of Soviet culture were sharply questioned or rendered obsolete, the image of the Second World War managed to survive all these contextual changes.

Today, the war's international context has been partially erased. Not only are references to the allies less explicit, but claims about the strictly Russian character of the event are growing. The role of the other Soviet peoples is increasingly denied, with claims that it was practically only the Russians who took part in the fight.[13] In addition, the analysis of the massive Soviet losses has worked to reinforce the link between war and suffering. The loss of men allegedly reflects the heroism of the Russian people, which, despite its great human suffering, thus stands exalted. As the sociologist Lev Gudkov explains, the Great Patriotic War allows individuals to talk about themselves without referring to the state or the authorities, notions that are perceived negatively today.[14] The magnitude of the casualties in WWII is decreasingly associated with Soviet mismanagement or Stalin's lack of military preparation.

11 Luke Harding, "Russian historian arrested in clampdown on Stalin era," *The Guardian*, October 15, 2009, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/oct/15/russia-gulag-historian-arrested (accessed January 8, 2011).

12 "Boiazn' proshlogo," *Vedomosti*, October 22, 2009, http://www.vedomosti.ru/newspaper/article/2009/10/22/217043 (accessed January 7, 2011).

13 Lev Gudkov, "'Pamiat'' o voine i massovaia identichnost' rossiian," in *Pamiat' o voine 60 let spustia. Rossiia, Germaniia, Evropa* (Moscow: NLO, 2005), pp. 83-103.

14 Lev Gudkov, "Pobeda v voine: k sotsiologii odnogo natsional'nogo simvola," in Lev Gudkov, *Negativnaia identichnost'. Stati 1997-2002 gg*. (Moscow: NLO, 2004), p. 39.

Rather, it is explained by Russia having been surprised by "German aggression."

However, the situation is more complex than it first seems: despite the regular attempts to rehabilitate Stalin, such as the 2010 initiative of the Moscow town hall to hang portraits of the "people's father" in celebration of the victory, and the constant administrative pressure placed on those who study Stalin's repressions, his criminal acts are not denied, but erased, left to one side. The Russian Orthodox Church, for instance, fosters an alternative memory in which the victims of the repression are sanctified, and even canonized, at the same time as it cultivates its ties with the political authorities.[15] In 2007, for the seventy-year commemoration of the great trials of 1937, President Putin visited the site of Butovo, a major memorial site devoted to the victims of the Stalinist purges.[16] In addition, since the election of Dmitri Medvedev, more nuanced statements have been made in the public sphere: on May 7, 2010, the eve of the commemorations, the Russian president tried to dissociate the victory of 1945—considered as absolute, unquestionable, but attributed to the Russian people, and not to its leaders—from Stalin, the relation to whom is unambiguously negative. He used the term *totalitarianism* to define the nature of the Stalinist regime and stated that the massive organized crimes committed against his own people "cannot be pardoned."[17]

The debates around the figure of Stalin must therefore be dissociated from the narrative about the Great Patriotic War: while the former give rise to contradictory statements, opinion around the latter is unanimous. However, the president's use of the term *totalitarianism* potentially opens up the door to a debate about the spread of this totalitarianism across Europe and about when it came to an end.

15 Zoe Knox, *Russian Society and the Orthodox Church* (London: Routledge, 2005).

16 S. Kishkovsky, "Putin visits memorial to victims of Stalinist Great Terror," *International Herald Tribune*, October 30, 2007, www.rusnet.nl/news/2007/10/31/currentaffairs01.shtm (accessed November 26, 2007). On Butovo, see Kathy Rousselet, "Butovo. La création d'un lieu de pèlerinages sur une terre de massacres," *Politix*, no. 77, 2007, p. 55-78.

17 "Dmitri Medvedev: 'Prestupleniiam Stalina protiv sobstvennogo naroda net proshcheniia'," *Gazeta.ru*, May 7, 2010, http://www.gazeta.spb.ru/316694-1/ (accessed January 8, 2011).

(b) Memory as part of Foreign Policy in the post-Socialist World

The memory of the war reveals an international aspect that cannot be forgotten: the memory policy implemented in the countries of Central Europe may launch a frontal attack on the Soviet narrative, but this is also true for the Western one. The interpretation of WWII has in fact become one of the identity matrixes of the Central European member countries of the European Union, which have sought for some years to inflect the West-European-centered interpretation of WWII in which Russia is depicted as an ally and the transition from Nazi to Communist totalitarianism is not discussed. A narrative escalation among all actors has intensified the radical character of some of the notions being espoused and transformed the debate into a component of foreign policy strategies.

Since the start of the 1990s, Czechoslovakia and Poland set up so-called lustration policies and purged the administration of figures considered to be too closely tied to the socialist regime.[18] The progressive criminalization of the Soviet communist legacy deeply shocked Russian public opinion, which was by no means prepared for such polemics. The memory wars grew in magnitude with the entry of several former socialist states into the European Union, a sign of the intrinsic link between the assertion of European identity and a judgment on the totalitarian past of the continent.[19] In 2004, Tallinn and Riga made an official request to Moscow for damages of several hundreds of millions of dollars for what they defined as the Soviet occupation, while the Estonian and Lithuanian presidents refused to participate in the commemorations of the victory in Moscow on May 9, 2005.[20] In the same year, a White Book was published by the Estonian State Commission on Examination of the Policies of Repression, and then in 2007, the Polish minister of Culture proposed to remove all the statues tied to WWII that were erected during the Soviet period. The official remembrances of the anti-Soviet resistance move-

18 Roman David, "Lustration Laws in Action: The Motives and Evaluation of Lustration Policy in Czech Republic and Poland (1989-2001)," *Law & Social Inquiry*, vol. 28, no. 2, 2003, pp. 387-439.

19 On the Letton case, see Eva-Clarita Onken, "Ot istorii osvobozhdeniia k istorii okkupatsii. Vospriatie Vtoroi mirovoi voiny i pamiat' o nee v Latvii posle 1945 goda," in *Pamiat' o voine 60 let spustia. Rossiia, Germaniia, Evropa,* pp. 436-451.

20 Eva-Clarita Onken, "The Baltic States and Moscow's 9 May Commemoration: Analysing Memory Politics in Europe," *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 59, no. 1, 2007, pp. 23-46.

ments, even of those that fought in a German uniform, have also risen in number. And, lastly, Ukraine tried to have the Holodomor (the Ukrainian famine of 1932-1933) recognized internationally not only as a crime against humanity but as a genocide.[21]

The events surrounding the bronze statue in Tallinn in 2007 have played a leading role in the rise of Russian concerns about the interpretation of WWII. They resulted from a long process of reinterpretation of history by the Estonian authorities, as well as by Estonian nationalist associations, who pushed for those who combated the Soviet troops to be actively remembered. In 2002, a monument was built to the Estonians who combated for the liberation of their country on the German side, and were thus represented in Nazi uniforms. It was first erected in Pärnu, then taken down and moved to Lihula, but an international outcry forced the authorities to remove it once again. In 2007, when the Estonian government decided to remove the eternal flame that was burning in front of the "Liberating Soldier" and rebaptize it as the "Monument to Fallen Soldiers of WWII," the Russian community of Estonia came out in numbers, deeming May 9 to be its day of celebration.[22] In order to avoid the bronze soldier becoming a meeting place for the country's Russian-speakers, the authorities decided to move it from the center of the town to nearby a military cemetery, giving rise to violent clashes between ethnic Russians and the Estonian forces of order that led to the death of one person on the Russian side.

Russia considers that attempts to internationalize the divergent interpretations of history hide a political objective, namely to undermine Moscow's legitimacy on the international scene. The twists and turns of the Kononov affair – Kononov is the only Soviet soldier to have been accused of committing a crime against humanity; he was first sentenced by Latvian courts but later acquitted by the European Court of Human Rights[23] – has heightened the Rus-

21 The crime against humanity was accepted by the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the OSCE and the UN General Assembly, but the accusation of genocide was rejected by the majority of states and international bodies, and only a dozen countries recognized it, including Georgia.

22 Heiko Pääbo, "War of Memories: Explaining 'Memorials War' in Estonia," *Baltic Security & Defence Review*, vol. 10, 2008, pp. 5-28.

23 "Latvian war crime case overturned on technicality," *The Baltic Times*, July 25, 2008, http://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/20944/

sian feeling that the Baltic countries, Ukraine, and Poland are working side by side to weaken Moscow's position. In addition, after a bill was tabled by the Baltic countries, the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly decided, in 2006, to vote on resolution 1481, called the "Need for International Condemnation of Crimes of Totalitarian Communist Regimes." The resolution asserted the equation between Nazism and Stalinism, and thus sharply undermined one of the central pillars of the Russian regime: for the Kremlin, supported by the majority of its citizens, fascism can by no means be compared to the communist experience. In response to this internationalization of memory wars, Russia has sponsored UN resolutions opposing the resurgence of Nazism. In 2009, the General Assembly adopted a draft resolution, which was proposed by Russia (but refused by the USA, with the majority of European countries abstaining), to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance, including attempts to heroize the Nazi movement and former Waffen SS members and to desecrate monuments to the fighters against Nazism.[24] Russia had therefore hoped to create international legislation that it could draw on in its future memory wars with its neighbors.

These conflicts over memory are highly symbolic and have domestic and international dimensions. Domestic, because memory shapes not only state identity – itself a permanent process of (re)construction – but also consensus within society. For Estonia, the gap between the informational worlds in which its Estonian and Russian communities live is one of the key drivers of the conflict over historical symbols.[25] International, because at stake here supposedly is a commonly shared European memory, which remains something of a paradox. Russia considers that the USSR cannot be accused of having accelerated Europe's total war on the pretext of the German-Soviet pact: according to Moscow, the Pact is at best the equivalent of the Munich Agreement, but not a Soviet-German alliance for carving up a few European states. Similarly, for Russian public opinion, the totalitarian interpretations of the communist regime that compare it with Nazism are illegitimate, both as a mat-

24 See the Russian viewpoint in *Remarks by Russian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Alexander Yakovenko at Press Conference at Interfax News Agency, Moscow*, September 19, 2008, http://www.un.int/russia/new/MainRoot/docs/off_news/190908/newen1.htm (accessed January 16, 2011).

25 See the ongoing research on the Politics of Memory in the Baltic countries by Daina Eglitis and Laura Ardava.

ter of principle (the "nature" of the two regimes is not the same), and historically (communism combated fascism and paid a heavy price in terms of human lives). Moreover, it is deemed that the entry of the Baltic States into the Soviet Union in 1939/1945 cannot be considered as an occupation that would be subject to legal sanctions. In June 2010, the famous Russian lawmaker Konstantin Kosachev then explicitly evoked the fundamental contradiction at the base of the Russian Federation. He maintained that the Russian Federation fulfills all the international obligations of the USSR as its successor state, but does not recognize any moral responsibility or legal obligations for crimes committed by the Soviet authorities.[26]

For the Central European states, the conventional narrative of the 1945 "victory," shared by both Western Europe and Moscow, entirely obliterates the lived experience of this median region, which saw itself as being passed from one form of totalitarianism to another.[27] They thus request that they be fully recognized within the construction of European memory and therefore raise the question of Russia's place in Europe. By drawing a parallel between the Soviet experience and the Nazi regime, Russia no longer appears as the liberator of Europe. This works to weaken the legitimacy of its claim to be able to participate in the affairs of the continent, and opens up the path to a severe symbolic undermining of its Europeanness. As viewed from Moscow, then, these memory stakes are therefore crucial.

(c) Shaping Domestic Memory: Bringing up the Youth

These memory debates take place in a Russian domestic context increasingly stamped by the will of the authorities to control so-called civil society[28] and to shape youth orientations. During the Soviet period, the authorities regularly expressed concern about the lack of youth politicization. They considered the youth to be the least reliable of the regime's age brackets, and the one through which Western influences were most likely to infuse society as a

26 Konstantin Kosachev, "Sovetskaia li Rossiia?," *Ekho Moskvy*, June 29, 2010, http://echo.msk.ru/blog/kosachev/691501-echo.phtml (accessed January 16, 2011).

27 Timothy Snyder, "The Historical Reality of Eastern Europe," *East European Politics and Societies*, vol. 23, no. 1, 2009, p. 11.

28 Graeme Robertson, "Managing Society: Protest, Civil Society, and Regime in Putin's Russia," *Slavic Review*, vol 68, no. 3, 2009, pp. 528-547.

whole. In the 1990s, youth political movements were rare and seemed confined to the extreme fringes of far right, or to Soviet nostalgia: Zhirinovsky's Falcons claimed to have nearly 30,000 sympathizers; the Communist Youth Union counted nearly 40,000 members; and the Avant-garde of Red Youth about 6,000 militants.[29] With the exception of the National Bolshevik Party, the other parties and movements were little interested in the youth, whom they considered lost to politics.

This situation first changed during the 1999-2000 elections, when the Kremlin decided to found a presidential party and openly to assume control of associations. In 2000-2001 a movement called "Walking Together" (*Idushchie vmeste*, i.e., with Putin) was formed whose ideological orientation consisted essentially in supporting the presidential figure. Following the catharsis of the Orange revolution in Ukraine in 2 004, Russian political circles moved with alarm at the ability of a peaceful social movement to topple the established powers. The role of youth movements in the "colored revolutions" was widely discussed in the media and extensively analyzed by circles of political advisors.[30] Parties opposed to Vladimir Putin also came to think they might transform the youth into a force for change, basing their strategies on those of coalitions such as Otpor in Serbia, Kmara in Georgia, and Pora in Ukraine. Thus, movements were formed such as Defence, which gathered together the youths of the Union of Right Forces and Yabloko, as well as various ecological and human rights associations, not to mention Change, a group affiliated with the opposition movement The Other Russia.[31]

Having coincided with the "colored revolutions," the promotion of a state-centered patriotism that specifically targets the youth is now something that the Kremlin considers a matrix of political stability. Its patriotic agenda focuses on the three driving forces of consensus: first, the rehabilitation of symbols

29 More details in I. Ia kovlev, Iu. Ryshkina, and E. L oskutova (eds.), *Molodezhnye politicheskie organizatsii. Programmy i liudi* (Moscow: Panorama, 2007).

30 Especially in publications of the Evropa publishing house, which is close to United Russia.

31 Several books have been published in Russian on this subject. See, for instance, Pavel Danilin, *Novaia molodezhnaia politika 2003-2005* (Moscow: Evropa, 2006); Viktor Savel'ev, *Goriachaia molodezh' Rossii. Lidery, organizatsii i dvizheniia, taktika ulichnykh bitv, kontakty* (Moscow: Kvanta, 2006); O.M. Karpenko, and I.A. Lamanov, *Molodezh v sovremennom politicheskom protsesse v Rossii* (Moscow: Sovremennaia gumanitarnaia akademiia, 2006).

pertaining to the fatherland and institutionalized historical memory, which in large part intersects, albeit not completely, with that of the Soviet Union; second, the instrumentalization of Orthodoxy to build up symbolic capital; and third, militarized programs of patriotic education designed for the young. In 2001, the Kremlin instructed the Duma to vote on the first state program for the "patriotic education of the citizens of the Russian Federation for 2001-2005." The text of the second program, whose mandate spanned from 2006 to 2010, hoped to "make the patriotic consciousness of Russian citizens one of the most important values, one of the foundations of moral and spiritual unity" and to make patriotism the "spiritual backbone" of the country.[32] The third program, adopted at the end of 2010, was given a budget of 25 million dollars.[33] Like the two preceding programs, it focuses mainly on the memory of the Soviet Union and especially of WWII.

The Kremlin has also sought to take advantage of this dynamic to transform the youth into a resource for social mobilization. The tactic is designed both to demonstrate that the time when the younger generation was apolitical is now a thing of the past, and to prevent their involvement in oppositional revolutions.[34] This was the role attributed to *Nashi* (Ours), which has become the most visible pro-presidential youth movement in the domestic and international arena. The presidential party United Russia also formed its own youth movement, the Youth Guard (*Molodaia Gvardiia*). And other groups connected to local powers have formed at the regional or municipal levels, for instance Young Russia (*Molodaia Rossiia*) in Moscow. *Nashi* was reported to have about 100,000 supporters in 2008 (with about 8,000 regular activists).[35] Its aim has been to channel the desires for change harbored by certain sections of the youth and their growing feelings of generational conflict. The

32 On the patriotic programs, see Marlene Laruelle, *In the Name of the Nation: Nationalism and Politics in contemporary Russia,* pp. 175-180, and Valerie Sperling, "The last Refuge of a Scoundrel: Patriotism, Militarism and the Russian National Idea," *Nations and Nationalism*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2003, pp. 235-253.

33 See http://www.rosvoencentr-rf.ru/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=308:-q-2011-2015-q&catid=86:-2011-2015-&Itemid=57 (accessed January 16, 2011).

34 See also Viktoriya Topalova, "In Search of Heroes: Cultural Politics and Political Mobilization of Youth in Contemporary Russia and Ukraine," *Demokratizatsiya*, no. 1, 2006, pp. 23-41.

35 Ekaterina Levintova and Jim Butterfield, "History Education and Historical Remembrance in Contemporary Russia: Sources of Political Attitudes of pro-Kremlin Youth," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, no. 43, 2010, p. 158.

movement thus defines "Our revolution" (playing on the double meaning of *our*, as a possessive adjective and as membership in the movement) as a renewal of the political elite by youths starved of control over their country. *Nashi's* criticisms of politicians and deputies, including those of United Russia, are virulent, yet it proclaims unfailing loyalty to the president and the prime minister.[36]

Taking the Komsomols as model, the movement organizes many social actions as part of what it calls a "politics of small acts": visits to orphanages and retirement homes, bringing together children and aged persons, giving aid to the handicapped, providing recreational activities for adolescents in socially disadvantaged neighborhoods, participating in the restoration of churches, and giving aid to libraries. *Nashi* does not hide its moral conservatism. It has declared struggles against alcoholism, drug use, and "uncontrolled sex," has launched campaigns against bikinis on beaches and abortions, promoted marriage, heterosexuality, and large families, and encouraged respect for social, religious, and military hierarchies. But further still, *Nashi* organizes political lobbyism in favor of the youth and serves as a social elevator for its members, who benefit from genuine career development possibilities through internships in the main state-run companies and in the administration.[37]

During their brief lives, the pro-presidential youth movements have been through many upheavals: heavily instrumentalized during the 2007 election campaign, they were partially taken out of the media gaze after 2008, since the authorities began to be concerned about their contestatory character and about not having enough control over them. *Nashi* was swiftly denounced, including by the official media, for engaging in "hooligan activities" and underwent a major reorganization which limited its autonomy. Its main leaders, including Vassili Yakemenko, were nominated to the State Youth Committee, a move that defused its contestatory potential. Today, these pro-Kremlin movements continue to occupy the youth scene, though in a manner that is less ostentatious but perhaps more durable, thanks to the growing number of their activities and increases in state financing. They remain in a grey zone,

36 See their manifesto, "Manifest molodezhnogo dvizheniia '*Nashi*'," http://www.Nashi.su/news/3020 (accessed January 16, 2011).

37 Interviews with *Nashi* activists, Moscow, November 2007 and October 2010.

however, since they have privileged access to public financing, but are also under suspicion for being too radical in their anti-Westernism, which presents a problem for the *brand* that the Kremlin is trying to promote abroad.

Memory Wars in the Near Abroad: Russia's Europeanness at stake

(a) Paradoxical Matrixes of Youth Patriotism

A central component of the *Nashi* project is to develop a "nationally oriented civism"[38] among the younger generations. *Nashi* has adopted the Kremlin's argumentation according to which the Constitution prohibits all state ideology but that there is, *nevertheless,* no state without an idea of state-hood/nationhood. *Nashi*'s narrative on Russian identity is thus built on three primary references: first, the pathos of the friendship of peoples; second, anti-fascism; and third, the Great Patriotic War. The contradictions and paradoxes among all these elements are numerous. For example, the reference to the "friendship of peoples," stamped by the Soviet tradition of essentializing so-called ethnic differences, is combined with xenophobic statements against the allegedly inappropriate behavior of migrants toward Russian culture.[39] The same ambiguities crop up with *Molodaia Gvardiia*, which has denounced the xenophobic violence of the skinheads, but also orchestrated demonstrations against migrants.[40] The term "fascism," as for it, is used in a global sense. It is not linked to historical fascism or even to Nazism, and thus turns out to be a defamatory catch-all category for the Islamic fundamentalism, terrorism, the nationalism of the other peoples of Russia, and skinhead violence, not to mention Vladimir Putin's political opponents, ranging from Eduard Limonov to Gennadi Ziuganov, Dmitri Rogozin, and Garry Kasparov.

The *Nashi* manifesto contains further paradoxes in the relation to the established elites and to history. The movement thinks of itself as future-oriented, since it holds that the new generation's mission is to give life to what they call

38 http://www.nashi.su/deti_rossii, no longer online.
39 Interviews with *Nashi* activists, Moscow, November 2007 and October 2010; and the collection of *Nashi* brochures on the "friendship of peoples."
40 See "Molodaia Gvardiia protiv nelegal'nykh migratov," *Molodaia Rossiia*, January 18, 2011, http://www.molgvardia.ru/mg_regions/2011/01/18/25099 (accessed January 23, 2011).

"megaproject Russia," which consists in making Russia the global leader of the 21st century.[41] At the same time, several passages of the manifesto focus on history, whose interpretation is seen to clarify the present and outline the future. *Nashi*'s interpretation of history is paradoxical, combining openness and closedness. It underscores three key periods, which are celebrated for the unity, stability, and great power they have given Russia: first, there is medieval Muscovy, shut off from Western influence; second, the Russia of Peter the Great and Catherine the Second, opened onto the world; and third, the Soviet Union from Stalin to Brezhnev, between the troubles of the 1920s-1930s and those of the 1980s. Similar paradoxes emerge in geopolitical terms: Russia is celebrated as being the "geographical centre of the world economic system,"[42] yet *Nashi*'s publications develop a view of it as a country encircled by external and internal enemies working in concert to destroy it.[43]

Nashi's manifesto claims that Russia has been a leader of world history on three occasions, in 1917, 1945, and 1991. Each occasion is defined in positive terms: the installation of a Communist regime is claimed to have accelerated Russia's modernization and the progression of socialist ideas throughout the world; the outcome of the Russian victory over fascism is adjudged to have spread "the idea that each people has a right to independent development"[44]; and the disappearance of the USSR is claimed to have permitted public recognition of individual freedom. Once again, the historical contradictions underlying interpretations of the Soviet past are overcome via the idea of a reconciliation of opposites. While individual freedom is glorified as the founding principle both of the new Russia and the *Nashi* movement, the manifesto insists that personal freedom is possible only insofar as a state is free from external influence and sovereign democracy is established. The legal training that *Nashi* offers to some of its members contains a similar paradox: The program mentions not only delicate subjects, such as the rights of army conscripts and the relationship between citizens and the security services, but also states that "it hopes to show to all the defenders of human rights (…) that

41 "Manifest molodezhnogo dvizheniia '*Nashi*'."
42 *Ibid.*
43 L. Borusiak, "'*Nashi*': kogo i kak uchat spasat' Rossiiu," *Vestnik obshchestvennogo mneniia*, no. 5, 2005, pp. 17-29.
44 "Manifest molodezhnogo dvizheniia '*Nashi*'."

one can work without being subject to orders from the West, by looking for solutions that come from within Russia. [And that] subordination to external influence can be avoided by discarding cosmopolitan theories and cleaving to the experience of Russia and of the peoples living in it. This is the sure path to decreasing Western influence and to preserving the country's sovereignty."[45]

In keeping with the Kremlin's curriculum of patriotic education, one of the movement's priorities is quite naturally to facilitate reconciliation between the youth and the army. Its reconciliation campaign is conducted as part of a program called "Our army" (*Nasha armiia*), which organizes a multitude of activities: leaflet drops to relate details about army life; meetings between military personnel and youths of call-up age; and tactical paramilitary games designed to make the army attractive to young men by pointing up its access to technology, cutting-edge vehicles, weapons handling, and martial arts training. At Yaroslavl, the *Nashi* team has offered firearm training sessions where the targets are the leaders of The Other Russia.[46] However, the movement remains aware of the key problems that cause young conscripts to flee, as is shown in its plea, thus far refused by the armed forces, to establish *Nashi* cells in military units in order to counter hazing (*dedovshchina*). Some *Nashi* members also wish to promote Orthodoxy. However, the religion issue is a sensitive one: among the movement's multiple activities, the foregrounding of Orthodoxy is marginal and is reserved only for their professional activists. *Nashi's* aim on religious matters is nevertheless clearly formulated: "To show to all those from 16 to 26 years of age that Orthodoxy is not the religion of the old and of losers."[47] The religious education curriculum offered by *Nashi*, which has been personally validated by the Patriarch, first Aleksii II and then Kirill, provides for a modernized presentation of Orthodoxy, one that does not get bogged down in holy texts, but shows that faith also permits of social engagement and therefore of professional success. Orthodoxy is thus valorized as an element of identity and not as a transcendental principle.

45 http://www.nashi.su/pravozaschita, no longer online.
46 http://www.nashi.su/nasha_armiya, no longer online.
47 http://www.nashi.su/pravoslavie, no longer online.

(b) The Great Patriotic War: A Mirror of Today's Challenges

Nashi cultivates Soviet nostalgia: its internet site is registered under the "su" (Soviet Union) domain, and several organizational terms are borrowed from the Soviet register. For instance, those with positions of political responsibility in the organization are called "commissars." The majority of patriotic activities offered are linked to the remembrance of WWII: restoring soldiers' tombs and monuments dedicated to the war; organizing commemorations of the main battles; holding regular meetings with veterans; making memorial trips to the sites of great battles, and so on.[48] Each year, the commemoration of May 9 forms one of *Nashi's* most media-driven events. Called *Nasha Pobeda* (Our Victory), it gathers several tens of thousands of activists, and aims to symbolize the passing of the flame from war veterans to the younger generation: in 2010, its chief slogan was "Remember the War, preserve the Fatherland!"[49]

The Great Patriotic War is granted a sacred character and thought of as a total event, in the sense that no nuance of interpretation or partial reading can be accepted without undermining the whole grand narrative. *Nashi*'s sacralizing of war is accompanied by the feeling of losing contact with the vital force of this remembrance, namely the veterans, whose ranks are thinning. An attempt was begun in 2010 to uphold the personalization of the war by filming the last remaining veterans. This attempt, however, will be unable to prevent a profound undermining, in the years to come, of the way in which the cult of the war is passed on to the younger generations in Russia. So, the movement combines collective methods of action directly inherited from the Komsomols, while also trying to modernize the acts of public mourning at the level of technology.[50] It conceives the war as the embodiment of the nation, whence the heavily symbolic activities it has organized, such as the opening of a small WWII museum at Grozny in 2006, to symbolize Chechnya's "return" to the Russian nation.[51]

48 http://www.nashi.su/patriotizm, no longer online.
49 "Na aktsii 'Nasha Pobeda' razdali 70,000 patronov," *Nashi*, May 15, 2010, http://www.nashi.su/news/31633 (accessed January 22, 2011).
50 See the details of the "O Vserossiiskom proekte *Nasha obshchaia pobeda*," http://www.41-45.su/index/about/ (accessed January 22, 2011).
51 "Stanut li chechentsy '*Nashi*mi'?," *Nashi*, July 5, 2006, http://www.nashi.su/news/220 (accessed January 22, 2011).

The memory war is part of a process of remembrance stamped by strong generational conflicts. While *Nashi* largely decries the 1990s, which views it as a decade of state failure, non-defense of national interests, and hypocrisy from the elites as regards the transition to the market economy and democracy,[52] it positively evaluates the war years and, more broadly, the Soviet decades of the second half of the 20th century. The upshot is the superposition of one historical period onto another, enabling a link to be drawn between WWII and Putin's Russia, and the 1990s to be presented as a simple historical "parenthesis." Indeed, *Nashi* insists on making a parallel between the alleged threat of dismemberment currently weighing on Russia and WWII. This historical transposition is direct and unambiguous: with the aim of rejuvenating Russia, the younger generations cast themselves as part of the heroic heritage of the war veterans, while the enemies of contemporary Russia are cast as participating in the Nazi heritage. Each year, operation *Nasha pobeda* is thus accompanied by statements about the need to "continue the fight against those who desire the downfall of Russia," whom *Nashi* defines as the "opponents of modernization, corrupted liberals, fascists, the media that publish lies and terrorist declarations, and the falsifiers of history."[53]

The tendency to amalgamate all opponents into a single category, creating the impression of an immense conspiracy with multiple ramifications both within the country and abroad, forms one of the underpinnings of *Nashi* political discourse. The "falsifiers of history" are singled out by name, and include: Ukrainian president Viktor Yushchenko, Estonian prime minister Andrus Ansip, Georgian president Mikhail Saakachvili, Russian journalist, human rights activist, and editor-in-chief of the Prima information agency, Alexander Podrabrinek (he denounced the Soviet past as bloody and shameful), and the popular writer Viktor Suvorov (Rezin).[54] What emerges clearly from this list is the eminently political character of the "falsification of history" narrative. Targeted are those countries of the Near Abroad that are refractory to Russian influence and with which relations are difficult. Viktor Suvorov, denounced as

52 Ekaterina Levintova, and Jim Butterfield, "History Education and Historical Remembrance in Contemporary Russia: Sources of Political Attitudes of pro-Kremlin Youth," *op. cit*., pp. 144-154.
53 "Nasha pobeda," 41-45.su/news/show/id/11/ (accessed January 22, 2011).
54 Na aktsii 'Nasha Pobeda' razdali 70,000 patronov."

a "traitor of the fatherland," can also be added to this list of external enemies: a former Soviet military man exiled in Great Britain, he has published pop history best-sellers accusing Stalin of having escalated tensions in Europe by providing economic and military support to Hitler and has claimed that the USSR was just as responsible for the unleashing of the war as Germany.[55]

In 2010, *Nashi* demonstrations against the "falsifiers of history" called upon activists to come with the decried works in hand, and the event almost took on the aspect of a book-burning. The eminently demonstrative character of *Nashi* actions constitutes one of its strengths, as it has managed to capture media attention and its provocative acts have won over many youths. But it has also earned *Nashi* the attentions of the authorities, whose leaders do not find such acts all that amusing.

(c) The Near Abroad as a Battle Field for Memory

Remembrance of the Great Patriotic War has taken its place at the summit of a pantheon that is more political than historical, in which what dominates is *Nashi* actions against such things as Kosovo's independence, NATO's eastward expansion, and Georgia's military operation in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. One of the matrix elements of this focus on war is the memory conflict with the Baltic countries, which has materialized around the bronze soldier of Tallinn. By means of highly symbolic media stunts, *Nashi* has tried to galvanize public opinion and the Russian authorities. It has embarked upon a one-week blockade of the Estonian embassy in Moscow, launched a popular quest to finance the resettlement of the bronze soldier in front of the embassy, requested that the street where the embassy is situated be renamed after the young Russian who died in the Tallinn riots, Dmitri Ganin, called to boycott Estonian products,[56] and sent young Russians dressed in WWII uniforms to Tynismiagi Square to serve as "living monuments" to the memory of the war.[57] These events have worked to confirm the heavily symbolic character of

55 On Viktor Suvorov, read David Glantz, "Review: *Icebreaker: Who Started the Second World War?*," *The Journal of Military History*, vol. 55, no. 2, 1991, pp. 263–264.

56 "Ostanovim fashism v Estonii," http://fashistestonia.narod.ru/ (accessed January 22, 2011).

57 "*Nashi* aktiviski vernulis' na Rodinu," *Nashi*, June 30, 2007, http://www.nashi.su/news/19564 (accessed January 22, 2011).

Nashi's patriotism, which grants strategic importance to modifications of the urban landscape, architectural heritage, and toponymy. Thus, the memory debates have tended to crystallize around questions of urban development (the moving of the soldier to another part of the town or not), thus relegating to the shadows the real historical polemics linked to the qualification of the 1939/1941-1991 period as a Soviet "occupation" or "invasion."

All the pro-presidential movements, with *Nashi* and *Molodaia Gvardiia* in the lead, have concentrated on denouncing so-called Estonian fascism. Each of their websites devotes one of its pages to this issue,[58] and many word plays have been crafted for the occasion, such as, for example, "eSStonian", "Andrus AnSSip", while expressions such as "state vandalism" or "state fascism" have become widespread throughout public opinion generally and gained a certain notoriety.[59] The youth movement's communications strategies around this Tallinn event were quite successful, but have also had unforeseen consequences. The illegal entry of *Nashi* youths onto Estonian territory in Soviet military uniforms resulted in their arrest, expulsion from the country, and above all their prohibition from having a Schengen visa for ten years.[60] Since the Kremlin like to sport pro-European discourses, *Nashi's* contestatory behavior toward one of the EU member states has thus damaged the Kremlin's appearance of political correctness. This has contributed to the partial discrediting of the movement among the ruling elite.

The pro-presidential youth movements also distinctly target Ukraine, especially as the "Orange Revolution" played a key role in their structuring as "anti-Orange movements."[61] In this way, the patriotic group Stal' (steel), a subbranch of *Nashi* that calls for more direct action on the streets and whose name alludes to Stalin, has protested against the attempt of the Ukrainian authorities to declare Stepan Bandera, head of the Organization of Ukrainian

58 See, for instance http://www.nashi.su/akcents/6; http://politaktiv.ru/category/centrist/molodaya-gvardiya/page/6/ (accessed January 25, 2011).

59 "Patriotizm i dvizheniya "*NASHI*'," *Levada-Tsentr*, January 21, 2008, http://www.levada.ru/press/2008012101.html (accessed January 26, 2011).

60 "*Nashi* aktivisty rasskazali vsiu pravdu o svoem prebyvanii v Estonii," *Nashi*, June 30, 2007, http://www.nashi.su/news/19609 ((accessed January 26, 2011)

61 See the article by Jussi Lassila in this issue.

nationalists during the Second World War, a national hero.[62] *Nashi* set up a web page specifically devoted to fighting against "falsifications of history" in Ukrainian school textbooks: they protested not only against the image of a bureaucratic and criminal Russia, adjudged responsible for the famine of the 1930s, but also revived old historiographical debates about the identity of Kievian Rus', disputed to be the first state of the Russians, the Ukrainians, and/or the Byelorussians.[63] The fact that official Ukrainian discourses depict their country as the main victim of the Second World War obviously lies at the heart of *Nashi* resentment. Viktor Yushchenko's proposal to create an international tribunal to judge communism for crimes against humanity has provoked fierce reactions on the blogs of the youth movements.

For many years now, Georgia has also been decried for its anti-Russian geopolitical logics and its gesturing toward NATO: during the war of August 2008, *Nashi* reiterated faithfully the official version of events, as did Russian public opinion, revealing their delight at Moscow's military victory, at the "liberation" of the South Ossetians and Abkhazians in danger of "genocide," and at the international discrediting of Mikhail Saakachvili. In 2009, the focus little by little shifted onto questions of memory. On December 21, 2009 – the birthday of Mikhail Saakachvili – the Georgian authorities destroyed the Memorial of Glory that was built in Kutaisi to commemorate the victory of 1945, officially erected for urban improvement. This event shocked Russian public opinion and both *Nashi* and *Molodaia Gvardiia* produced reams of commentary about it. The youth movements also criticized the Georgian historical narrative at the time of the erection of a monument to the 3,500 Georgians who died for independence: those who fell in combat against the Red Army in 1918, those who fell during the uprising against Soviet power in 1924, and those who died in summer 2008 during the Five Day war.[64] In 2010, *Molodaia Gvardiia* at-

62 http://madeofsteel.ru/news/cat/Aktualnie_kommentarii_100/nov_Stepan_Bandera_-_ne_geroy_Ukraini_147 (accessed January 26, 2011).

63 "Fal'sifikatsiia istorii v ukrainskikh uchebnikakh istorii," *Nashi*, no date, *Nashi*.su/falsificate/31655 (accessed January 26, 2011).

64 "Andrei Vorob'ev: Memorial Slavy – napominanie o nashem obshchem podvige," *Molodaia Gvardiia*, December 21, 2010, http://www.molgvardia.ru/groupchanges/2010/12/21/24304 (accessed January 26, 2011).

tached great importance to the erection of a similar monument to that of Kutaisi in Moscow, which supposedly represents the memory war with Tbilisi.[65]

In 2010, these memory wars shifted over to Moldova, which had announced the creation of a Commission of Judgment of the communist past.[66] The decision was made by the president of the parliament, and interim president, Mikhai Gimpu, whose eminently domestic aim was to fight against the powerful Moldovan communist party of Vladimir Voronin. Claiming that he remained in the framework of the above-mentioned Council of Europe resolution, Gimpu also decided to declare June 28 the "day of memory for victims of the Soviet occupation." As a result, several representatives of *Molodaia Gvardiia* went to Kishinau to organize conferences about the "falsification of history." Moldovan history textbooks were accused of glorifying the Romanian dictator Antonescu, of valorizing the fascist groups of the 1930s, and of presenting Moldova as the fatherland since time immemorial of uniquely Romanian-speaking populations, with no room for Slavic ones. The surmise was put forward that Mikhai Gimpu's unique goals were to gain entry into the EU, to have NATO military bases installed on Moldovan territory, and to mark his "first steps toward the repression of Russophile sentiments in the republic."[67] The youth movements thus played an external support role for domestic political forces, the authorities of Pridnestrovie and the Russian Orthodox Church, all of which objected to these rewritings in terms of identity. They also had the support of the Institute of the Diaspora and Integration, financed by the then mayor of Moscow, Yuri Luzhkov.[68]

Nashi and *Molodaia Gvardiia* were brought to discuss the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact on the occasion of its 70th anniversary in 2009. While *Nashi* remained very reserved in their remarks about it, the United Russia youth movement

65 "Putin otkryl v Moskve memorial pavshim geroiam," *Molodaia Gvardiia*, December 21, 2010, http://www.molgvardia.ru/nextday/2010/12/21/24317 (accessed January 26, 2011).

66 "Moldaviia otkazalas' shchadit' proshloe radi otnoshenii s Rossiei," *Gazeta.ru*, January 15, 2010, http://www.gzt.ru/topnews/politics/-moldaviya-otkazalasj-schaditj-proshloe-radi-/282479.html (accessed January 30, 2011).

67 "23ogo fevralia 2010 g. v Kishineve sostoialsia kruglyi stol, posviashchennyi problem fal'sifikatsii istorii," *Molodaia Gvardiia*, February 23, 2010, http://www.molgvardia.ru/mg/2010/02/23/14376 (accessed January 30, 2011).

68 "Fal'sifikatsiia istorii – put' v nikuda," *Russkaia liniia*, December 2, 2008, http://rusk.ru/st.php?idar=113547 (accessed January 30, 2011).

went so far as to organize a conference with the aim of "preserving historical memory and countering attempts to falsify history."[69] In doing so, its aim was to challenge an OSCE resolution which the movement claimed was signed "under the dictates of the [same] countries that validated the Munich Agreement of 1938," and to protest against a bill to turn August 23 into a day for the victims of Nazism and Stalinism. *Molodaia Gvardiia's* point of view reiterates the official positions of the Russian state. As such, its members have also participated in the official commemoratory celebrations in Katyn, recognizing that the massacre was organized by the Soviet and not the Nazi armies, a viewpoint that the Communist youths continue to reject.[70]

Discussing the issue of ideological borders and mechanisms of mobilization

There are several elements of this analysis that would merit further investigation, in particular the difficulty in perceiving the ideological borders and differences in mobilization mechanisms allowing one to distinguish so-called extremist movements from official currents.

Nashi and the other pro-presidential movements share common traits with the most radical and self-avowedly anti-establishment movements. They share, for instance, mechanisms for direct street action and a passionate commitment to ideological struggle. Yet, they distinguish themselves in that they offer their members prospects for social promotion and political careers that the opposition movements cannot. This challenges prevailing assumptions about the organizational bases of extremist movements and their relationship to mainstream politics. A sociological analysis of transfers from one movement to another would likely reveal similar mechanisms of producing political commit-

69 "Molodaia Gvardiia o Pakte Mototova-Ribbentropa," *Molodaia Gvardiia*, August 23, 2009, molgvardia.ru/ mg/2009/08/23/8909 (accessed January 30, 2011).

70 "Kirovskie komsomol'tsy proveli aktsiiu protiv fal'sifikatsii istorii," *KPRF.ru*, December 12, 2008, http://kprf.ru/actions/85398.html (accessed January 30, 2011); "Katynskomu memorialu ispolnilos' 10 let," *Molodaia Gvardiia*, June 29, 2010, http://www.molgvardia.ru/mg_regions/2010/07/29/19254 (accessed January 30, 2011).

ment. Indeed, cross-belongings running, for example, from the skinhead movements to *Nashi*, and vice-versa, do appear to exist.[71]

Among the unifying themes shared both by the Kremlin-backed youth and oppositional movements, that of the "information war" being waged against Russia is extremely widespread. All the youth movements are sensitive to the role played by images and narratives in the construction of a Russian "brand," and are convinced that the Soviet Union, followed by Russia, has time and again lost the image war against the West.[72] The fact that the countries with which the memory wars are the fiercest are also those which support NATO's eastward expansion and militate for the European Union to be more offensive in relation to Moscow, heightens the feeling of geopolitical encirclement and containment in the name of historical interpretation. The youth movement Stal' has, for instance, made its main objective to "develop pro-Russian networks abroad, with the goal of creating a positive image of Russia, in order to give us a strategic superiority. We will change the world, turning ignorance and incomprehension of Russia into respect and even into a fashion for it."[73]

The question of Russia's autonomy is also central and lived as an emotional commitment by all youth groups, regardless of their political positioning. The texts published by the youth movements about the "the falsification of history" go into great detail about their feeling that foreign countries are interfering in the writing of history – a key element of national sovereignty that abides no foreign presence. The financing of historical works by western foundations is therefore heavily criticized: for Stal', the aim of this financing is to "convince the whole world, including us, that our people is not autonomous (*nesamosostoiatelen*) and has no right not only to participate in global leadership, but not even to the autonomous development of its own freedom and its own natural resources."[74] The equating of an eminently economic question – the Russian

71 Several young *Nashi* members confirmed that they have recruited members from among the most radical movements of skinhead tendency. They say that they recognize the flexibility of belonging for some youths, whom they had hoped to "set on the right path," but I have not yet been able to meet any of these "passers" personally.

72 Interviews with *Nashi* activists, Moscow, November 2007 and October 2010.

73 steelastra.ucoz.ru (accessed January 18, 2011).

74 http://madeofsteel.ru/projects/Borba_s_falsifikatsiey_istorii_4 (accessed January 18, 2011).

state's control over its natural resources — and the interpretation of WWII reveals the prism through which history is viewed. As it is formulated by the Stal' movement, "the victory in the Great Patriotic War is the foundation of the contemporary sovereignty of the Russian Federation."[75] Insofar as this sovereignty is understood as a driver of the Europeanness of Russia, the interpretation of history is therefore formulated in terms of state security and the relation to Europe.

The complex relationship between the "imperial paradigm" and the "post-Yalta order" must also be delved into. If the end of WWII spelled the abandon, more or less consensual or conflictual, of the colonial system by Western Europe, for Russia the link created is more complex, and has considerable domestic implications. The worldviews promoted by *Nashi* reject any reinterpretation of the post-Yalta order and posit as an unquestionable given the historical legitimacy of the USSR in its incorporation of the Baltic States and Bessarabia into its borders and its institution of a socialist bloc of brother countries. Further, today it also denies the autonomy of the independent states to write their own history of the 20th century. The *Nashi* viewpoint, therefore, indirectly implies the illegitimacy of the new states' sovereignty and of their historical narrative. Instead, it confirms Russia's right to oversee them in the name of its former imperial domination. To deny the interpretation of 1945 as a victory would thus go hand-in-hand with some sort of contemporary political and identity illegitimacy. This parallel would merit further discussion in order to highlight the ideological articulations between exiting from the imperial tradition, shaping the memory of the continent in the 20th century, and articulating the Europeanness of Russia.

The youth movements are thus part of the mainstream, that of a political and discursive *continuum* linking them to more extremist youth movements, as well as to the Patriarchate, the secessionist movements in Moldova, Georgia, or Ukraine, and the commercial and corporate dynamics in force in Russian political life. They also reproduce the Kremlin's own ambiguities insofar as they express both the Russian state's claims to Europeanness *and* its refusal to adhere to what it considers to be an EU dictate; its celebration of the emergence of the communist regime *and* of the end of the Soviet Union; its appeal to human rights as the normative concept *and* its practice promoting

75 *Ibid.*

an "autonomy of civilization" (sovereign democracy); its will for legality *and* its providing support to secessionist movements in the so-called post-Soviet "frozen conflicts"; and lastly, its cult of personal commitment to an ideological goal *and* career strategies, or the defense of corporate interests.

Conclusions

The contradictions inherent to the youth movements, to the narratives and strategies by which they insert themselves in the public sphere, reveal their acceptance of the evolutions of the Russian social and cultural landscapes. Even as they endorse the importance of collective action, the young activists of *Nashi* and *Molodaia Gvardiia* deploy individualist logics pertaining to private self-realization, the quest for professional success, and the link between personal happiness and the pride of being Russian. Ambitions to change the world are directly articulated with the political and economic future of the country. The motto is that anything is possible provided one gives oneself the means to do it: "We can create Russia such as we envisage it."[76] So they do not challenge the principles of the liberal reforms of the 1990s, but only the way in which they were implemented. The narrative they use to justify their social action even claims to be grounded in the idea that people should be independent of the state, that is, no longer be "assisted" by the former Soviet welfare state. These youth movements are therefore Soviet-neoliberal hybrids, as Julie Hemment has very rightly called them.[77]

The youth movements are thus obliged to combine modes of action that are linked to counter-culture protests (street actions, provocations, carnivalistic strategies, humor, sometimes passing over into illegality) and to support the authorities, which are themselves much more prudent and concerned to uphold their "political correctness." They promote an explosive mixture of Soviet nostalgia, focused on past greatness and the victory of 1945, with calls for Russia to assume a leading role in the twenty-first century and to be at the forefront of globalization. Their actions against the "falsification of history" are

76 "Manifest molodezhnogo dvizheniia '*Nashi*'."
77 Julie Hemment, "Soviet-Style Neoliberalism?: *Nashi*, Youth Voluntarism, and the Restructuring Social Welfare in Russia," *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol. 56, no. 6, 2009, pp. 44-45.

almost entirely connected with the Near Abroad. They conduct very few debates about domestic "falsifiers," who incite less youth mobilization than does the idea of a supposed threat to state sovereignty. *Nashi* is therefore continually grappling with the conflict between Russia's international integration and the protection of its national autonomy. The apparent inconsistencies of its narratives reprise those of the Kremlin, and do not appear as a factor hampering political mobilization; on the contrary, since the multiplicity and flexibility of narratives makes it possible to speak to the vast majority of people. The interpretation of history is thus posited as a powerful mechanism of mobilization and of consensus, but the support of the authorities has also proven to be a central element. For these youth groups need both to cultivate their counter-culture image as well as to receive the support of the Kremlin, without which they would probably not exist. They have to manage their dependency upon the political authorities, a dependency that they refuse to accept fully since they see themselves as the spontaneous expression of a youth culture.

Behind the question of sovereignty, which seems to constitute one of the matrices of youth-group narratives, resides that of Russia's Europeanness. The discourses on the return of great power, the desire to become one of the world's leaders of the 21st century, and the theme of "Orthodox/Slavic civilization", are paradoxically part of a will to assert a specific form of Russia's Europeanness: its common cultural and philosophical references, its modern and developed society, the universalism of its values, and its right to have a say in the affairs of the rest of the world. However, this Europeanness is not that of the European Union, whose normative character is rejected. For the youth movements, the sudden competition over Europeanness with the former allies of the socialist bloc is apprehended as disloyal and raises the specter of a backward, barbaric, and dangerous Russia that has no place in Europe. By accepting the intrusion of narratives from Central and Eastern Europe that undermine the "victory" of 1945, the European Union is charged with adopting a Russophobic stance, and Moscow is held to be alone in continuing to uphold the authentic European values contained in the "victory against Fascism."[78]

78 Richard Sakwa, "Russia and Turkey: Rethinking Europe to Contest Outsider Status," *Russie.Nei.Visions*, no. 51 May 2010.

The recognition that the pluralism of memories does not undermine state legitimacy, or collective belonging, involved a long pr ocess of learning, on which Europe has worked for many centuries. The growing circulation of national imaginaries and historical narratives presumes that the memories of WWII in Europe be recognized as multiple, even when the sentiment is dominant that two narratives stand in complete contradiction with one another, such as those of the Soviet regime as liberator and as aggressor. An ambiguous successor of the USSR, the legitimacy of the Russian state in relation to its own public opinion as well as to other countries is founded on the fact of its being a liberator of Europe, and not its aggressor. Resentment against Europe, which itself is nonetheless also valued positively in numerous everyday practices, is therefore a matrix for these young identities. Their Russian narrative on the *Great Patriotic War* comes into competition with a European narrative on the *Second World War,* which tends to distance itself from the Russian version to the extent that the states of Central Europe deflect it in favor of equating the two totalitarianisms of the 20th century. For the youth movements – and on this point they are in sync with Russian public opinion and the Kremlin's strategies – the issue of historical responsibility cannot be raised if it means putting into question the narrative that shapes collective and individual identity. Moreover, they consider that Russian memory construction is by no means obliged to adapt itself to the European frame, and that neither does it aim to present itself as outside of it either.

4 Making Sense of *Nashi*'s Political Style

The Bronze Soldier and the Counter-Orange Community

Jussi Lassila, Aleksanteri Institute, Finland

Ukraine's Orange Revolution of 2004 was probably the most effective color revolution for Russia in terms of political mobilization.[1] These effects have largely appeared as a counter-"revolution," with visible manifestations of regime authoritarianism and anti-democratic practices, especially during Vladimir Putin's second term as president. The youth movement *Nashi* ("Ours"), which was established in early 2005, has become one of the best-known realizations of such practices. The movement's pro-Kremlin position finds a clear resonance with David Lane's[2] argument of post-Communist, or post-authoritarian, regimes' strategies to create their own youth and student organizations for political projects.[3] In Ukraine, the role of pro-Orange youth movements was central in creating and maintaining communities that led to the displacement of the old regime.[4] The role of *Nashi* has functioned differently

1 Marlene Laruelle, *Youth, Patriotism and Memory in Russia*. Seminar paper held at the Aleksanteri Institute in Helsinki, November 10, 2009 (used by author's permission, see also her article in this volume); Andreas Umland, "Ponimanie Oranzhevoy revolyucii: demokratizatsiya Ukrainy v zerkale Rossii," Polit.ru, December 30, 2009, available at http://www.polit.ru/institutes/2009/12/30/orange.html (accessed September 9, 2010); Andreas Umland, "Oranzhevaya revolyutsiya," russkoe antizapadnichestvo i revoliutsiya rossiiskogo politicheskogo rezhima poslednykh let, Polit.ru, January 14, 2010, available at http://www.polit.ru/institutes/2010/01/14/umland.html (accessed September 9, 2010); and Robert Horvath, "Putin's 'Preventive Counter-Revolution': Post-Soviet Authoritarianism and the Spectre of Velvet Revolution." *Europe-Asia Studies* 63, no. 1 (January 2011): 1–25.

2 David Lane, ""Coloured Revolution" as a Political Phenomenon," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 25, no. 2 (2009): 113-135, 132.

3 See also Horvath, "Putin's 'Preventive Counter-Revolution'."

4 Andrew Wilson, Ukraine's Orange revolution (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); Maksym Zherebkin, "In search of a theoretical approach to the analysis of the

than the youth movements seen in Ukraine, and it is in order to scrutinize the symbolic practices by which *Nashi* produces a supposedly convincing "counter-orange" model. When one places *Nashi* on a continuum of pro-Kremlin youth formations, it appears that their projects – even their entire organization – are relatively ephemeral and ulti mately ineffective in the production of a positive self-image. The major concern of this article is how *Nashi*'s political discourse is formed in relation to the movement's ambition to create a cogent "counter-Orange" community.

In methodological terms, the question at hand regards *Nashi*'s discourse, its ideological content[5] regarding its forms or style, and its reliance on the Kremlin's state patriotism and the promotion of "sovereign democracy." The less-discussed question, however, concerns the "how" of *Nashi*'s ideology – that is, how *Nashi* expresses itself through its ideological position. This article argues that this viewpoint is central for understanding the controversial outcomes of the movement's public image in the context of post-Orange Russia. Moreover, this viewpoint may offer insights into the political communication of pro-Kremlin youth movements in general. *Nashi*'s web reports concerning its most active theme – campaigns centered around the Bronze Soldier episode in 2007-2008 – were explored as a case study of the group's political discourse. From the viewpoint of a contemporary social movement, online writings can be understood as the crystallization of an official voice.[6] To offer a background to the examination of the Bronze Soldier case, *Nashi*'s position in the light of previous literature, sociological data, and views from two *Nashi* leaders are elaborated upon. The key concepts and the theoretical framework of the discourse-analysis approach begin this presentation.

"Colour revolutions": Transition studies and discourse theory." *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 42 (2009): 199-216.

5 For more about this tradition of the so-called Critical Discourse Analysis, see, for example, Norman Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992); Lilie Chouliaraki & Norman Fairclough, *Discourse in Late Modernity: Rethinking Critical Discourse Analysis.* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press,1999).

6 Here I follow Brian McNair's view of political communication, who defines it as all of those elements of communication that might be said to constitute a political image or identity. See Brian McNair, *An Introduction to Political Communication* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1995), 4.

Key Concepts and Theoretical Framework

In addition to considerable interest from Russian and foreign media, *Nashi* has also evoked notable academic interest. To mention just a few of the earlier studies on *Nashi*, Julie Hemment[7] has examined the group's projects as realizations of post-Soviet Russian civil society practices; Graeme B. Robertson[8] has evaluated it as an ersatz social movement in relation to Putin's regime, in terms of regulating civil society practices in Russia. In the same vein, Robert Horvath[9] has approached *Nashi* as a central part of Putin's "preventive counter-orange" strategies; Doug Buchacek[10] has analyzed its early years from the viewpoint of generational mobilization; and Marlene Laruelle[11] has studied youth patriotism and memory politics in relation to official patriotic policies, with a special focus on *Nashi* as well as the *Molodaya gvardiya*, the youth section of Russia's party in power, or "Putin's party," Edinaya Rossiya. Valerie Sperling[12] has studied *Nashi*'s role in relation to the Kremlin's patriotic policies; Maya Atwal[13] has approached the group in terms of activist views in relation to *Nashi*'s official role, and has discussed its conditions of sustainability; Dmitry Andreev[14] has also treated *Nashi*, as well as its predecessor, *Idushchie vmeste*, in terms of the movements' complexity in relation to the

7 Julie Hemment, *Youth voluntarism and the restructuring of social assistance in Russia*, paper presented to the Kennan Institute workshop, International Development Assistance in Post-Soviet Space (Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars, Washington DC, May 2007, used by author's permission); Julie Hemment, "Soviet-Style Neoliberalism?: *Nashi*, Youth Voluntarism, and the Restructuring Social Welfare in Russia." *Problems of Post-Communism* 56, no.6 (November/December 2009): 36-50.

8 Graeme B. Robertson, "Managing Society: Protest, Civil Society, and Regime in Putin's Russia." *Slavic Review* 68, no. 3 (2009): 528-547.

9 Horvath, "Putin's 'Preventive Counter-Revolution'."

10 Doug Buchacek, *Nasha Pravda, Nashe Delo: The Mobilization of the Nashi Generation in Contemporary Russia* (M.A. thesis, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 2006).

11 Marlene Laruelle, *Youth, Patriotism and Memory in Russia.* See also her article in this volume.

12 Valerie Sperling, "Making the Public Patriotic: Militarism and Anti-Militarism in Russia." Marlene Laruelle, ed., *Russian Nationalism and National Reassertion of Russia* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2009): 218-271.

13 Maya Atwal, "Evaluating *Nashi*'s Sustainability: Autonomy, Agency and Activism," *Europe-Asia Studies* 61, no. 5 (July 2009): 743–758.

14 Dmitry Andreev, *Fenomen molodezhnoy "upravlyaemoi passionarnosti" i vozmozhnye scenarii ego perspektiv. Molodezh i politika.* (Moskva: Biblioteka liberalnogo chteniia 17. Moskovskoe byuro fonda Fridrikha Naumanna, 2006): 49-61.

Kremlin's official policies; and Ulrich Schmid[15] has paid attention to *Nashi*'s communicative strategies, evaluating them as a continuation of Soviet-era traditions and Soviet-era conceptual art.

Many of these invaluable contributions to the study of *Nashi* have largely treated this movement as a (sometimes seemingly passive) realization of elite – that is to say, Kremlin – political projects. Andreev's and Atwal's views are especially relevant, as this article concerns itself with how *Nashi* communicatively "handles" its position between a reputation as a Kremlin rubber-stamp and the cogent mobilization of largely apolitical youth culture. In this vein, *Nashi*'s discourse is treated here as balancing between didactics and stimulation, angling to bring these two dimensions into a convincing wholeness. The group's designation of didactics can thus be defined as official and conformist, especially the educative relatedness of its activities. This concerns, for example, *Nashi*'s discursive production of state patriotism.[16] Consequently, the youth culture's unresponsiveness to

existing political formations in Russia – which evidently concerns *Nashi* as well – is at least partially recognized by the movement, and this bad reputation is communicatively related to the didactic dimension. It follows that this recognition activates the need for communicative work that could downplay such a reputation. Thus, a demand for stimulating discourse emanates from *Nashi*'s expectations of Russian youth as autonomous and, more precisely, apolitical. In the case of *Nashi*, the crucial addition to the division between didactic and stimulative dimensions is that the tension between them is not so much a substantive issue; didactics would be exclusively linked to patriotic elements and stimulation to "non-patriotic" ones. On the contrary, the tension particularly lies in *Nashi*'s assumptions about what behavior produces "correct" patriotism.

Without a theoretical grounding, the division between didactics and stimulation is thin, since these definitions are clearly subjective. A didactic instruction can be very stimulative or, vice versa, a "stimulative" signifier may be felt as a didactic political, or cultural, order. To theorize this division accordingly, this

15 Ulrich Schmid, "*Nashi* – Die Putin-Jugend. Sowjettradition und politische Konzeptkunst." *Osteuropa* 5 (2006): 5-18.

16 See, for instance, Sperling, "Making the Public Patriotic."

article relies on Pierre Bourdieu's[17] views on cultural production and language-use. According to Bourdieu, all recognizable artifacts of social reality (e.g., the language of political actors) have a particular relation to the aspect of hierarchized cultural production. In terms of artistic contexts, Bourdieu writes: "As liberated as the holders of the different kinds of capital may be from external constraints and demands, they are traversed by the necessity of the fields[18]19 which encompass them: the need for profit, whether economic or political. It follows that they are at any one time at the site of a struggle between two principles of hierarchization: the heteronomous principle which favors those who dominate the field economically or politically (for example 'bourgeois art'), and the autonomous principle (for example 'art for art's sake')."[19] These two types of hierachizations can also be referred to as external and internal hierarchizations, which clarifies the principles of the field in acting toward other fields (external hierarchization) and toward its own field (internal hierarchization).[20] Internal hierarchization is the same as the field of restricted cultural production, and external hierarchization is the field of large-scale cultural production.[21]

To apply this framework to *Nashi*'s political discourse, the case becomes about *Nashi*'s agency in the given political situation—which falls between official state policies and the movement's ambition to stimulatively represent the political "didactics" for youth. In this respect, according to Bourdieu's theoretical framing, didactics and stimulation are no longer loose categories that depend on purely subjective judgments. Rather, they orientate to the different

17 Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge, England: Polity Press, 1991); *The Field of Cultural Production* (Polity Press, 1993); and *The Rules of Art* (Stanford University Press, 1996).

18 To radically condense Bourdieu's theory, it could be called a continuous theoretization of social fields. The most general field division is the division and mutual relation between economic and cultural fields (for more, see Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: The Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1984).

19 Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art*, 216.

20 Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art,* 216-217.

21 Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production; Language and Symbolic Power*; For more about the application of Bourdieu's fields of cultural production in post-Soviet Russia, see, for example, Alexei Yurchak, "Privatize your name: Symbolic work in a post-Soviet linguistic market." Journal of Sociolinguistics 4/3, 2000, pp. 406-434; Serguei Oushakine, "The Quantity of Style – Imaginary Consumption in the New Russia." *Theory, Culture & Society* 17, no. 5 (2000): 97-120.

fields of *Nashi*'s sociopolitical reality that stand against one another. It is *Nashi*'s political position that forces the movement to search for a somewhat cogent balance between these incompatible fields of (political) cultural production. Thus, large-scale cultural production can be defined as the group's officially supported cultural production. Youth culture has only a part in this – albeit an important one. This principle is closely linked to the understanding of youth in official policy, including the Soviet legacy, within its paternalistic and instructive aspects.[22] Consequently, the restricted cultural production is *Nashi*'s cultural production, which aims to highlight the notion of youth as distinct from adult-driven youth practices.

In very general terms, the tension between didactics and stimulation in *Nashi*'s case can be understood as the tension between adult and youth cultural production in the field of politics. More specifically, this tension comes about as friction between those who have power and authority in terms of symbolic capital to establish particular political projects (like the president in Russia) and those who lack authority and legitimacy to implement these projects. In other words, *Nashi* operates, on the one hand, as a representative of large-scale cultural production (state policies); on the other hand, this task of representation must be carried out in a situation that requires symbolic capital suitable for the rules of restricted cultural production (youth). Consequently, following Bourdieu,[23] it can be assumed that cultural production that relies too heavily either on large-scale or restricted production appears to fail, while *Nashi*'s central task is to unify the demands posed by these fields. The task of the state is the task of the youth, or vice-versa. *Nashi*'s major aim is to diminish the tension between these two.

Bourdieu's framework is fruitfully compatible with those views of cultural pragmatism that aim to transcend the polarization between structure-oriented

22 See, for example, *Strategiya gosudarstevennoy molodezhnoy politiki s kommentariyami* (Gusev, B.B. & Lopukhin, A.M. (eds). Moskva: Izdatel'stvo gosudarsvennogo social'nogo universiteta, 2007), available at http://www.mon.gov.ru/press/news/3318,print/ (accessed October 27, 2010); Gosudarstvennaya programma "Patrioticheskaya vospitanie grazhdan Rossiiskoi Federatsii na 2006-2010 gody" (2005), available at http://www.ed.gov.ru/young_people/gragd_patr_vospit/gosprog_patriot/ (accessed April 15, 2010).

23 Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production.*

and agency-oriented approaches.[24] A special case is the modification of the concept of ritual. Jeffrey C. Alexander points out that social performances, whether individual or collective, can be analogized systematically to theatrical ones: "Rituals are episodes of repeated and simplified cultural communication in which the direct partners to a social interaction, and those observing it, share a mutual belief in the descriptive and prescriptive validity of the communication's symbolic contents and accept the authenticity of one another's intentions. It is because of this shared understanding of intention and content, and in the intrinsic validity of the interaction, that rituals have their effect and affect."[25]

Alexander's description is actually a "ritual-like action" when applied to modern societies or ones that can be broadly labeled as nation-states. The difference between rituals and ritual-like actions (the latter is the same as social performance) lies in the fact that in pre-modern societies, the communicative components in various cultures were profoundly ritual;[26] they were fused and not institutionally separated in any sense.[27] In other words, the components of a social performance[28] were blended.[29] Since then, previously combined components of ritualistic communication began to "de-fuse." Along with the emergence of more complex societies and their cultural formations, components of social performances started to institutionalize into separate formations: actors, audiences, representations, and so forth.[30] In *Nashi*'s case, this "institutionalization" (separation) in the post-Soviet space can be seen in terms of the de-fusion between an imagined, politically constructed youth and an autonomous "real" youth. Thus, the most important task for modern or se-

24 Jeffrey C. Alexander, "Cultural pragmatics: social performance between ritual and strategy," in Jeffrey C. Alexander, Bernhard Giesen, Jason L. Mast, eds., *Social Performance: Symbolic Action, Cultural Pragmatics, and Ritual* (Cambridge University Press, 2006): 29-30.

25 Alexander, "Cultural pragmatics," 29.

26 Following Victor Turner's views, Alexander (29) uses the birth of the ancient Greek drama as the initial dividing line between ritual and ritual-like strategy. See Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press,1974).

27 Alexander, "Cultural pragmatics," 38-40.

28 Alexander classifies these components into actors, audiences, representations, means of symbolic production, social powers, and mis en scenes, 38-40.

29 Alexander, "Cultural pragmatics," 38-40.

30 Alexander, "Cultural pragmatics," 42-51.

cular rituals is to "re-fuse" these institutionalized, separate components of performance into one coherent, meaningful whole. In Alexander's words:

The goal of secular performances, whether on stage or in society, remains the same as the ambition of sacred ritual. They stand or fall on their ability to produce psychological identification and cultural extension. The aim is to create, via skillful and affecting performance, the emotional connection of audience with actor and text and thereby to create conditions for projecting cultural meaning from performance to audience. To the extent these two conditions have been achieved, one can say that elements of performance have become fused.[31]

It is not difficult to conceptualize Ukraine's Orange Revolution in the context of this quote. In addition to the central role of the youth in Maidan Square in Kyiv – the central locus of the Orange Revolution – that event was able to "re-fuse" separate components of this social performance into a one "orange" community. This can be captured in Andrew Wilson's description of the events in Kyiv in the late 2004: "The mood in the Maidan did not just indicate support for Yushchenko or Tymoshenko personally; it was the articulate anger of a people finding their voice … students wanted a change in political culture, the poor wanted a change in political culture, and small and medium-sized businesses wanted a change in political culture."[32] In terms of ritual-like strategy, Yushchenko's camp was able to conduct "an affecting performance, the emotional connection of audience with actor and text and thereby to create conditions for projecting cultural meaning from performance to audience." As this article will show, *Nashi*'s political discourse includes a similar ambition; the crucial distinction from the situation in Ukraine is that this ambition emanates from a regime-maintaining position.

31 Alexander, "Cultural pragmatics," 54-55.
32 Andrew Wilson, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution* (quoted via Zherebkin "In search of a theoretical approach"), 199, 202.

Nashi and the Field of Youth Movements after the Orange Revolution

In late 2004, in the midst of the Orange Revolution, the first rumors of a new Kremlin-supported youth movement began to circulate.[33] These rumors proved to be correct. In February 2005, the "Antifascist Democratic Youth Movement *Nashi*" was officially established.[34] Its role as the successor to the group *Idushchie vmeste* became immediately clear when Vassili Yakemenko, the head of *Idushchie vmeste*, announced that he would be *Nashi*'s leader. From the viewpoint of political positions, *Nashi* can be located in the category that Tat'yana Stanovaya calls "loyal to the Kremlin."[35] Besides *Nashi*, this category includes the youth movements the Young Guard, Young Russia, and the Moscow-based Locals (the last one is my addition to Stanovaya's category), which operate and act according to the Kremlin policies. Those organizations that work to some extent in accordance with the interests of the Kremlin but whose ideology is openly nationalistic or leftist are in this same category. These include such movements as the Eurasian Union of Youth headed by the nationalist theorist of geopolitics Alexander Dugin, and the youth organization of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, well-known by its populist-nationalist leader Vladimir Zhirinovski. Stanovaya suggests that this category can be divided into "patriots" (openly nationalist movements) and "liberals" (i.e. pro-Kremlin movements).

The category opposite this one also includes patriots and liberals who can be either leftist or rightist. The leftist opposition includes such movements as For the Motherland, which is partly loyal to the Kremlin; the Union of Communist Youth; the Vanguard of the Red Youth; and the National Bolshevik Party. The

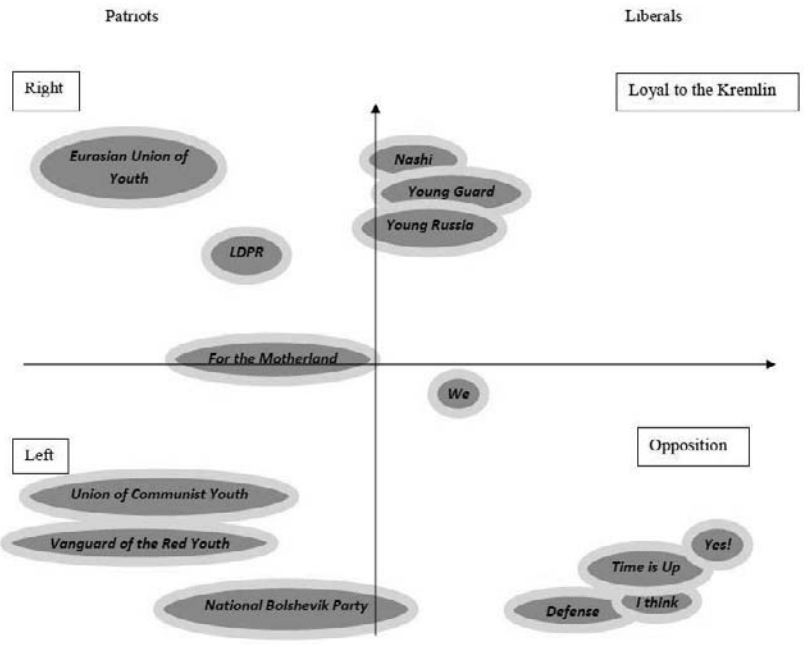
33 Mikhail Shevchuk and Dmitry Kamyshev, "Obyknovennyi "*Nashi*zm," *Kommersant*, February 21, 2005.

34 Viktor Savel'ev, *Goryachaya Molodezh Rossii* (Moscow: OOO Kvanta, 2006): 86; Ekaterina Savina, Yulia Taratuta & Mikhail Shevchuk, "Kratkii kurs istorii dvizheniya '*Nashi*'," *Kommersant*, January 29, 2008.

35 Tat'yana Stanovaya, "Molodezhnye organizacii v sovremennoy Rossii," Politkom.ru, 2005, available at http://www.politcom.ru/320.html, (accessed October 27, 2010).

latter is partly liberal (or right), and was one of the best-known Russian youth movements of the mid-2000s.[36]

FIGURE 1: Political coordinates of youth movements in Russia in 2005 (Tat'yana Stanovaya 2005)



In 2005, liberal opposition groups such as *We, the Democratic Altenative, Yes!, Time Is Up*, and *I Think* worked mostly virtually without concrete actions. The movement Defense, instead, worked actively as the ma in youth organization of the Apple political party, and can be defined as one of the main political opponents of *Nashi* in its early stages. In sum, Stanovaya ar-

36 Mikhail Sokolov, "Nacional-Bolshevistskaya partiya: ideologicheskaya evolyuciya i politicheskii stil," in Aleksandr Verhovsky, ed., *Russkii nacionalizm: Ideologiya i nastroenie*, (Moscow: SOVA, 2006): 139-164.

gues that the Russian youth movements of the mid 2000s can be defined by two factors: the relations of a movement to the current political authorities (the Kremlin) and a movement's political position on a left-right axis, as Figure 1 shows.[37]

Stanovaya continues that in light of the situation in 2005 – which in many ways persists today – the most influential and visible youth movement in Russia was *Nashi*. According to her, the main reason for the Kremlin's creation of *Nashi* was to develop a new version of the previous "official" youth movement, *Idushchie vmeste*, after its excessively radical and marginalizing actions. In addition, the crucial political motivation for the creation of *Nashi* was the twofold apolitical attitude of contemporary Russian youth from the Kremlin's viewpoint; this included the ongoing apoliticization of youth and its potential consequences. Stanovaya proposes that for the Kremlin, the apoliticization of youth actually meant unwanted politicization – political activities that were divergent from its interests (in particular, the Kremlin became concerned with preventing "Orange movements" among youth).[38] In this sense, *Nashi* was meant to function as a certain motivational system within official youth policy – a system in symbiosis with political interests that supported the maintenance of the current political authority. Hence, all those organizations (e.g. communists, Western liberals, and the extreme right) that did not fit into this framework are regarded as "apolitical." Now, the biggest challenge for *Nashi* in its task of mobilization are college and university students, who have been very skeptical toward such "ready-made systems of motivation." Few members of the university community can identify with such constructions, and most of them think that movements like *Nashi* work only as instruments of political manipulation. This skepticism has led, in turn, to the formation of various local youth movements within Russian institutions of higher education.[39]

Although Stanovaya's framework concisely contextualizes the position of *Nashi* in relation to other youth movements, her definition leads too easily to viewing *Nashi* in terms of a "rubber stamp" or a representative of "virtual de-

37 Stanovaya, 2005.
38 See Umland, "Oranzhevaya revolyutsiya."
39 Stanovaya, 2005.

mocracy" – a movement that fakes real democratic practices.[40] This is not a wrong definition, but from the viewpoint of scrutinizing *Nashi*'s own voice and its political discourse in terms of attempting to conduct a cogent re-fusion between didactic and stimulative demands it is not very productive approach. Stanovaya views *Nashi* as more or less subordinate to the Kremlin's goals. In this respect, she follows that common portrayal of the movement that Maya Atwal[41] calls the discourse of "creeping authoritarianism." *Nashi* appears as an attempt by the Russian state to undermine the development of independent political youth movements. While this approach can be relevant in many ways, its major problem is that it presumes the passivity of *Nashi* activists and the absolute ability of the state to determine the movement's development. Although Stanovaya rightly shows those problems that *Nashi* inevitably has faced, and faces, in it s activities—particularly skepticism from the side of Russian youth—she views the movement as a Kremlin project, which emphasizes the passivity of the movement in relation to the Kremlin's "orders."

In line with Atwal's concern to evaluate *Nashi* activists' views, Dmitry Andreev[42] offers valuable insights into the role *Nashi* in the context of Putin's Russia. According to him, *Nashi*, as well as *Idushchie vmeste*, can be described as a pure model of "managed passionarity" (*upravlyaemaya passionarnost'*) in the context of the managed or "sovereign democracy"[43] introduced by Putin's regime. With the term "passionarity," Andreev[44] refers to the emotions of people whose ambition is to devotedly serve the goals given for, or by, them. Moreover, for such passionate people the main goal is to organize, or reorganize, everyday life around them with the help of a constructed

40 See Andrew Wilson, *Virtual Politics. Faking Democracy in the Post-Soviet World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); Graeme B. Robertson, "Managing Society," 2009.

41 Maya Atwal, "Evaluating *Nashi*'s Sustainability," 744.

42 Dmitry Andreev, "Fenomen molodezhnoy "upravlyaemoi passionarnosti."

43 This concept was said to be the invention of Vladislav Surkov, one of the Kremlin's key ideologists, and the "ideological" founder of *Nashi*. In short, "sovereign democracy" aims to be a highly selective constellation of various ideological traits, picking up the best forms from the West, and then connecting them to the most valuable Russian traditions and practices. In this regard, "sovereign" refers to Russia's absolute autonomy to define its own democratic path. For more discussion of sovereign democracy by its ideologists and representatives, see *Pro suverennuiu demokratiiu.* Poliakov, L.V. (ed) (Moscow: Evropa, 2007).

44 Andreev, 50-52.

enemy or with negative examples. He argues that although *Nashi* acts as a pro-Kremlin movement, and is evidently supported to some extent by it, any type of emotional commitment is "prohibited" within the political guidelines of the Kremlin.[45] According to him, while the Kremlin aims to have total freedom in the field of ideology, it follows that for the current political power passionarity like the political stylistics of *Nashi* is not only unnecessary but also dangerous if it is to distribute its ideas according to its own administrative vertical. Andreev's[46] argumentation leads to such scenarios where *Nashi* starts to act on its own; the managed passionarity of the Kremlin becomes the pure passionarity of *Nashi*. In terms of *Nashi*'s challenge in balancing its didactic and stimulative demands, and fusing these two into a profitable message, Andreev's view is insightful. However, in addition to the examination of *Nashi*'s challenges regarding its didactic demand, it is necessary in order to also shed light on *Nashi*'s major target of stimulation: the potential interest or disinterest of the youth toward the movement.

Overview: The Political Participation of Russian Youth

In March 2005, immediately after the establishment of *Nashi*, 4 percent of Russians surveyed responded that they were familiar with the group.[47] Interestingly, despite this small number, *Nashi* was the best-known youth movement. The clearest majority, 66 percent (56 percent in the 18–24 age range) professed not to know of any youth movements. This unresponsiveness toward youth movements seemed to dominate public attitudes a couple of years later, as well, after *Nashi* had already received a large amount of attention in the Russian media. A poll conducted by the research center Foundation of Public Opinion (FOM),[48] which studied Russians' views of youth in relation to politics and political activity, also asked "what youth movements do you know or have heard about?" The most well-known was *Nashi*, but in

45 Andreev, 58.
46 Andreev, 59-61.
47 "'*NASHI*' v gorode: Rossiyane o molodezhnykh organizaciyakh," VCIOM, March 30, 2005), available at http://wciom.ru/arkhiv/tematicheskiiarkhiv/item/single/1156.html?no_cache=1 (accessed October 27, 2010).
48 FOM (2008), *Molodezh v politike*, available at http://bd.fom.ru/report/map/dominant/dom0820/d082024/printable/ (accessed October 27, 2010).

terms of the percentages, this familiarity with the group was not very convincing. Only 13 percent of Russians reported that "I know or have heard about the movement."[49] Seventy-five percent of Russians announced that it was "difficult to answer," or said that "I do not know any youth organizations." This is interesting, as *Nashi*'s visibility in the Russian media had been overwhelmingly high by the end of 2007. According to the Russian print media database Integrum, 2007 was the most active year in terms of *Nashi*'s media visibility.[50]

In light of this information, there is solid ground to argue that *Nashi*'s relatively low familiarity among the population (including youth) is based on public unresponsiveness rather than simply a lack of information. In other words, people have seen or heard about *Nashi*, but they do not care about it. The unresponsive attitudes toward *Nashi*, and to youth movements in general, find their strongest explanation in statistical information concerning youth political participation. In the 2005 FOM poll,[51] among all age groups of the population, disinterest in politics was higher than interest in it, but among younger generations (18–35) the disinterest was highest, at 65–67 percent. In addition, among the youngest age-group (18–25), 96 percent declared that "I have not participated in the activities of any political organizations" (among the whole population that figure was 80 percent).[52] (In 2008, 75 percent of the entire population considered that "there are only a few, if there are any at all, young people who are interested in politics.")[53] Among the age-group 18–35, this figure was 76 percent, although there were more respondents who consi-

49 FOM 2008; According to a poll by the Levada centre conducted in November 2007, this figure was clearly higher (26 percent) among those who professed to know political youth movements. *Nashi* was the best known youth movement. Interestingly, Idushchie Vmeste was fifth (8 percent) in this poll, ahead of many other more active youth movements. However, 66 percent responded that they had not heard of any youth movements (Levada Center, January 21, 2008, *Patriotizm i dvizheniya "Nashi,"* available at http://www.levada.ru/press/2008012101.html, accessed August 3, 2010). There are no major changes in the latest poll concerning *Nashi* (Levada Center, 2011: *Nashi – samoe izvestnoe politicheskoe dvizheniya v Rossii*, available at http://www.levada.ru/press/2011021002.html, accessed 17.2.2011).

50 Virve Leskinen, *Reprezentaciya molodezhnogo dvizheniya "Nashi" v tekstakh "Rossiiskoy gazety" v 2005-2008 gg*. (Master thesis, University of Jyväskylä, 2009).

51 FOM (2005), *Politicheskii potencial i politicheskaya aktivnost' molodezhi,* available at http:// bd.fom.ru/report/map/dd052222 (accessed October 27, 2010).

52 FOM (2005).

53 FOM (2008).

dered that "there are a lot of politically active young people," 14 percent, (while among the whole population the figure was 11 percent), and less of who considered that "there is not a politically active youth at all," 13 percent, (while among the whole population the figure was 22 percent).

In addition to revealing the apolitical nature of Russian youth, these data support the argument that underlines differences in the understanding of the concept of "political" between the population (predominantly among youth) and the political elite.[54] When in 2008[55] a poll asked, "do you think it is necessary or not that young people, not older than 25, participate in politics and the political life of the country," 69 percent of Russians considered that it was necessary and 65 percent considered that "participation in politics and political life helps young people to attain a high position in society." Hence, it seems that attitudes toward politics strongly depend on whether it refers to politics as such, or politics in "practice," that is, existing political structures and organizations. Thus, a highly unresponsive and apolitical attitude becomes apparent in the minimal participation in political organizations (96 percent have not participated in any organizations) but, at the same time, there is a relatively positive attitude toward political participation in terms of attaining a high position in society (65 percent). Apolitical youth is not taboo – on the contrary, it is explicitly pointed out in the State Youth Policy.[56] These data offer relevant background for didactic and stimulative dimensions of *Nashi*'s political discourse. On the one hand, youth must be politicized (stimulized) within official policies, and *Nashi* along with other pro-state youth formations are clearly in a central role in this official vision. On the other hand, however, a minimal interest toward these youth formations puts effective stimulation to the test. To move from this general context of statistical indicators to the micro-level of *Nashi*'s voice, views by two *Nashi* leaders follow.

54 For more, see Elena Omel'chenko, "Molodezh dlya politikov vs. molodezh dlya sebya? Razmyshleniya o cennostyakh n fobiakh rossiiskoy molodezhi," *Molodezh i politika* (Moskovskoe byuro fonda Fridrikha Naumanna. Moscow: Biblioteka liberalnogo chteniia 17, 2006).

55 FOM (2008).

56 *Strategiya gosudarstevennoy molodezhnoy politiki,* 17; For more about Russia's youth policy and national identity politics, see Douglas W. Blum, "Russian Youth Policy: Shaping the Nation's State Future," *SAIS Review* XXVI, no. 2 (Summer-Fall 2006): 95-108.

Views from Two *Nashi* Leaders

In March 2009, a *Nashi* leader referred to here by the pseudonym "Oleg" explained me his reasons to join the group:

> *Oleg:* Why did I join? Well, this is difficult and simple question at the same time (laughing)…difficult because…because I don't know why I joined eventually … it's difficult …in that time I already had experience in youth political activities and they had affected me extremely negatively … because … I had enough, it wasn't interesting.
>
> *Jussi:* Why?
>
> *Oleg:* Why…well, you know, each youth organization has a particular adult organization …the Komsomol had, and still has RSM KPRF, although less than the Komsomol of the KPSS… *t*he *Molodaya gvardiya* has *Edinaya Rossiya*, and that is always a very … complex enoughrelationship. And, from the viewpoint of progressivity, youth is repeatedly linked to this progress in the country, but adults, on the one hand, somehow systematize and … intervene, on the other hand … there is the federal youth leadership, there are adults with their own tasks, but in this region. And there is a kind of dilemma in the administration … well, the matrix's structure (matrichnaya struktura) is not in balance, it's not very … effective, or correctly speaking, it is non-balanced … the central operatives are not nice. Well, in sum, I had enough. I joined *Nashi* … because I was one of its founders, first in one region, and then in another … we sat down together … and decided to do something despite that negative experience. Difficult to say [I joined] perhaps because there were no adults at any time.

Oleg's partially wavering explanation of his reasons for joining the movement reveals an interesting combination of didactic "adult" discourse and autonomous "youth" discourse. The didactic discourse comes about implicitly as his major negative experience in the first paragraph. This negative view is actually explicated at the end of the second paragraph as the most probable reason why he actually joined *Nashi*. Hence, Oleg identifies himself as "non-adult," that is, supposedly as a representative of youth, representing different practices from those that had caused his highly negative experience. However,

the specification that elaborates his negative experience, and hence ground for joining *Nashi*, interestingly assumes a rather bureaucratic vocabulary, that is, markers of a discourse that could be termed "adult" as distinct from "youth": "there is the federal youth leadership," "dilemma in the administration," or "the matrix's structure is not balanced, it is not effective, correctly speaking, non-balanced." Such wording reveals that Oleg sees youth political activity principally in organizational terms with effective or non-effective results, but leaves open to what this effectiveness or ineffectiveness is attached. Since he is a leader of a pro-Kremlin youth movement, it could be assumed that this bureaucratic vocabulary actually reveals Oleg's understanding of *Nashi*'s role *vis-à-vis* official policies. As distinct from these "negative and ineffective/non-balanced" adult practices, Oleg mentions those youth movements that appear more or less as political opponents, or at least competitors, of *Nashi* (LDPR, KPRF, *Rodina*[57]). Interestingly, he also puts the youth section of Young Guard, "Putin's party," United Russia, in this same group as well. Hence, according to Oleg, *Nashi* is something different from all of these, allowing more space for youth in activities of the all-Russian level without adult "systematization" and "interference."

This implies that *Nashi* represents, or allows its members, that progressivism which is often linked to youth. Indeed, this comes about in Oleg's reply to my additional question as to whether *Nashi* is purely a youth movement:

> Yes, yes, clearly youth [movement] that LDPR, KPRF, *Rodina* do not have at all at the moment …well, on the other hand, if we view this question simply. Why simply? Because I saw the possibility to do something real in the movement. And that pleased me. This possibility was not only related to my own region, but it was a possibility to do something on the scale of the country … to be part of some kind of megaproject … and most important, I clearly understood that this project allows me personal improvement as well. I saw the educational program … and I really liked it, it was … and is interesting.

In short, Oleg sees *Nashi* as the movement in which he can do something real. This "real" allows activities not only at the regional level, but on the scale

57 These are all political parties that are represented in the Russian Duma and have youth sections.

of the whole country, by using the term "megaproject"—mentioned in the first lines of the movement's manifesto.[58] For him, *Nashi* represents a youth movement in which he can be part of "big issues" and undergo personal development, and this option is contrasted against adult practices.

This single sample from a leader of the movement does not allow one to draw overly wide conclusions of *Nashi*'s viewpoint in relation to official policies, but Oleg's views illustrate the movement's aptitude to be something unique along with its official political conformism. Similar views that draw on the movement's uniqueness and individual capabilities, as well as views that are compatible with official policies, can be tracked in "Vadim"'s reasons to join the movement. One of the early leaders of the movement, I interviewed him in May 2008, also using a pseudonym. While Vadim regards my question about reasons of joining the movement very nicely, he specifies:

> First, I did not join *Nashi.* There were few people…people who found the Nashi movement…and I joined this process…when I found out that there is a group of people in Moscow with whom my personal ideas are completely compatible (sovpadayut na sto protsentov)…That's why I joined the process.

By seeing the establishment of the movement as a process that was compatible with his own ideas and interests—a process that he found—he constructs himself as a leader, distinct from those who joined the movement later and continue to join it now. Or, as he puts it in another part of the interview, "I joined the movement because I had a possibility to be a part of its establishment." In addition, his individual interests are seemingly compatible with official discourse, since Vadim mentions that among *Nashi*'s goals he saw the idea of "maintaining the country's sovereignty" (*sokhranenie suvereniteta strany*) around the "orange events" (*oranzhevye sobytiya*) as principally important. Although Vadim does not contrast his and *Nashi*'s interests with "adult practices" as explicitly as Oleg does, his views on *Nashi*'s uniqueness are clearly contrasted with other pro-Kremlin activities as well:

> There was the youth movement *Idushchie vmeste*, a pro-Putin one…I experienced it, to say honestly, very negatively. I knew it well, but it did

58 Manifest, available at http://nashi.su/manifest (accessed October 27, 2010).

> not appeal to me. I did not join the party "United Russia" either…it was not interesting.

Although Vadim does not specify why he views *Idushchie vmeste* negatively, it can be assumed that the issues that *Idushchie vmeste* propagated were incompatible with his own (*sobstvennye*) ideas. Moreover, by mentioning an "adults' party" (United Russia) in this respect, Vadim's view implies that *Nashi* differs from it. This difference refers in all probability to organizational and practical aspects, rather than ideological ones, as United Russia is the key actor in propagating ideas of maintaining Russia's sovereignty, which Vadim regards as most important for *Nashi*, as well.

Oleg's and Vadim's views illustrate *Nashi*'s ambition to act as a sovereign conductor of official political views. In terms of communicating these views throughout the movement, the question is about *Nashi*'s own commitment in relation to official political guidelines. *Nashi* appears to be a movement that allows space for personal views in relation to official policies, and this possibility is contrasted with "adult practices." Following Andreev's[59] views of *Nashi* as passionate movement, this grassroots commitment may also appear contradictory in relation to official political guidelines. To attach these views to the theoretical framework outlined in this article, it can be assumed that *Nashi*'s didactic state-related agenda (large-scale cultural production) in the space of largely prevailing apoliticalness of youth tempts, or even forces, it to use such stimulation (restricted cultural production), which is incompatible with *Nashi*'s state-related position. In this vein, the Bronze Soldier episode presents a revealing example of *Nashi*'s belief to create a supposedly effective ritual in order to tackle this challenge.

The Bronze Soldier

The relocation of the Soviet-era statue "The Bronze Soldier" from the central Tallinn district Tõnismägi to the Tallinn's military cemetery by Estonian authorities in late April 2007 offered, from *Nashi*'s viewpoint, a brilliant platform to demonstrate the importance of, and its emotional commitment to, this

59 Dmitry Andreev, "Fenomen molodezhnoy 'upravlyaemoi passionarnosti'."

event.[60] In terms of expressing particular emotions for political purposes, Mabel Berezin[61] points out that "codifying, managing, mobilizing emotions transforms them into culturally accepted behaviors, situates them in time and space, and depending upon the context, adds a political dimension to the emotion."

Nashi's Bronze Soldier conforms perfectly to Berezin's description. The injustice that official Russia expressed toward the removal appeared to *Nashi* as a chance to make possible the re-fusion of the domestic concern with "fascism," and historical and nationally relevant external fascists. That is, a combination of the concern about growing domestic ethnic crimes,[62] Russians' generally growing engagement with national dignity,[63] and the outrage against the violation of a symbol of the most consensual and important pillar of Russian national identity, "The Great Patriotic War." In short, the fight against contemporary fascism as a social problem shows its legitimacy through one of the nation's major historical achievements, namely the "Great Victory" over fasc-

60 The Bronze Soldier is the informal name of this highly controversial Soviet World War II war memorial in Tallinn. Originally the statue was named "Monument to the Liberators of Tallinn" which was unveiled on September 22, 1947, three years after the Red Army reached Tallinn on September 22, 1944 during the Second World War. Its original location, a small park on Tõnismägi in central Tallinn (during the Soviet years the place was called Liberators' Square), consisted of a burial site of thirteen Red Army soldiers' which were reburied there in April 1945. For more, see "Bronze Soldier of Tallin," available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bronze_Soldier_of_Tallinn (accessed May 27, 2011).

61 Mabel Berezin, "Secure states: toward a political sociology of emotions," in Jack Barbalet, ed., *Emotions and Sociology*, (London: Basil Blackwell, 2002): 3-52, 35. For more about emotions and ritual in the context of Fascist Italy, see Mabel Berezin, "Emotions and Political Identity: Mobilizing Affection for the Polity," in Jeff Goodwin et. al, eds., *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001): 83-98.

62 Galina Kozhevnikova, "Radikal'nyi nacionalizm i protivodeistvie emu," in Aleksandr Verhovsky, ed., *Russkiy nacionalizm: Ideologiia i nastroenie* (Moscow: SOVA, 2006): 87.

63 Boris Dubin, "Zapad, granica, osobyi put': simvolika "drugogo" v politicheskoy mifologii Rossii," *Neprikosnovennyi zapas* 3, no. 17 (2001), available at http://magazines.russ.ru/nz/2001/3/dub.html (accessed October 25, 2010); Boris Dubin, "Krovovaya" voyna i "velikaya" pobeda," *Otechestvennye zapiski* 5, no, 20 (2004), available at http://magazines.russ.ru/oz/2004/5/2004_5_5.html (accessed October 25, 2010); Lev Gudkov, "Russkii neotradicionalizm i soprotivlenie peremenam," *Otechestvennye zapiski* 3, no, 4 (2004), available at http://magazines.russ.ru/oz/2002/3/2002_03_09.html (accessed October 25, 2010); and Lev Gudkov and Boris Dubin, "Est' li perspektiva u russkogo natsionalizma?," in *Russkiy nacionalizm: ideologiia i nastroenie.*

ism in 1945. In order to refuse this value with the present on the basis of a commonly shared threat, it follows that contemporary "fascists"—all those who call this victory into the question—aim to tarnish this value, in this case "Estonian fascists." Despite seemingly weak coherence between these two—the national patriotic policies of the Baltic States and violent attacks against those who do not look like Russians in Russia—*Nashi* seemingly believed that this would work as a strategy to distinguish itself within the nation's anger against Estonian history policies. The Bronze Soldier became the most intensive activity of the movement. The archive section of *Nashi*'s website before the new version of November 2009 included more than 1,300 reports in which Estonia was mentioned, principally in negative terms (these items are still available in the new version, as well). *Nashi*'s official response, the "ultimatum," to the statue's removal began as follows:

> *(a) The date for the demolition of the Estonian embassy building in Moscow has been decided*
>
> The federal commissar of the Movement Nashi, Vassili Yakemenko announced the date of the demolition of the Estonian embassy building in Moscow: June 12, 2007. As it was pointed out in the official announcement of the Movement Nashi, "it is necessary to find out possibility to remove the embassy of the fascist Estonia into another, more suitabl e place according to the law (imenno v ramkakh zakona).[64]

Such an account of a social movement, expressed with explicitly official language but whose content is deeply absurd, raises a question of its seriousness. *Nashi*'s "official announcement" follows the late-Soviet Russian tradition of *styob*—a peculiar form of irony that differed from sarcasm, cynicism, derision, or any of the more familiar genres of absurd humor.[65] Alexei Yurchak

64 *Opredelena data demontazha zdaniya Estonskogo posol'stva v Moskve*, May 1, 2007, available at http://nashi.su/news/17098 (accessed October 27, 2010); *Oficial'noe zayavlenie Dvizhenie "NASHI" po povodu istecheniya sroka ultimatum Estonskomu pravitel'stvu*, May 1, 2007, available at http://nashi.su/news/17063 (accessed October 27, 2010).

65 Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006), 249-250; Alexei Yurchak, "Necro-Utopia. The Politics of Indistinction and the Aesthetics of the Non-Soviet," *Current Anthropology* 49, no. 2 (April 2008).

points out that *styob* required such a degree of over-identification[66] with the object, person, or idea at which it was directed that it was often impossible to tell whether the *styob* was a form of sincere support, subtle ridicule, or a peculiar mixture of the two. In addition to over-identification with the particular symbol (or object) that is the precise and slightly grotesque reproduction of the authoritative form (e.g. slogan, official speech, or visual image), *styob* involved the "decontextualization" of that symbol; placing this form in a context that is unintended and unexpected for it.[67]

The headline of this report followed by the announcement of the movement's leader Vassili Yakemenko mimics the *styob*-like over-identification and decontextualization of the object. The Estonian authorities had announced a few days earlier – obviously with official bureaucratic language—that the statue would be demolished/removed from its original location.[68] *Nashi* then shows its own moral outrage by over-identifying the object.[69] However, the goal of the action for which this official language informs definitely decontextualizes the object: "the date of the demolition of the Estonian embassy building is June 12, 2007." In terms of political ritual, this date explicitly illustrates *Na-*

66 Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever*, 249-250. According to Ian Parker, the concept of overidentification is drawn from the realm of psychoanalysis but was forged by cultural activists in the Neue Slowenische Kunst into a weapon against Tito Stalinism and contemporary neo-liberalism. Overidentification works because it draws attention to the way the overt message in art, ideology, and day-dreaming is supplemented by an obscene element, the hidden reverse of the message that contains the illicit charge of enjoyment. Slavoi Zhizhek in particular has applied the concept of overidentification in his works. See Ian Parker, *Overidentification*. Explanation of the term at the site of the Lancaster University Management School (2005), available at http://www.lums.lancs.ac.uk/events/owt/6455/ (accessed October 27, 2010).

67 Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever,* 249-250.

68 These terms clearly illustrate the struggle over meanings and their interpretations between the official Estonian and Russian sides during, and after, the episode. The Estonian side systematically emphasized the verb "to carry" (viima), largely used in the passive. For example, it is pointed out in the Estonian version of the Bronze Soldier case in Wikipedia that: Praegu on skulptuur Kaitseväe kalmistul, kuhu see viidi Sõjahaudade komisjoni ettepanekul (See Pronkssõdur, available at http://et.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pronkss%C3%B5dur, [accessed March 2, 2010]). The Russian side, instead, interpreted this as a violent action, not only in symbolic, but concrete terms as well. This is because the use of the term "demolition" is intrinsically seen as the preceding stage of removal. In other words, the statue must be first demolished, only then can it be removed. For example, the Russian version of the Bronze Soldier used exclusively the term demontazh (See *Bronzovyi soldat,* available at http://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Áðîíçîâûé_ñîëäàò, [accessed March 2, 2010]).

69 *Oficial'noe zayavlenie Dvizhenie "NASHI."*

shi's attempt to attach a particularly patriotic and supposedly unifying element to the Independence Day of Russia, which is celebrated on June 12. This recently established holiday has remained relatively strange to many Russians, and in this vein this date exhibits *Nashi*'s willingness to promote its weak reputation by using it for the given political and symbolic practices.

However, while the use of *styob* could be an effective strategy in terms of mocking a particular political establishment and its practices, in the case of a pro-state movement that promotes official patriotic policies, *styob* seems to be a highly tentative strategy. In terms of protesting, it is evident that *Nashi* is against the Estonian official interpretation of the Second World War and its consequences (the Soviet-era as an occupation), resulting in a particular historical political practice toward the statue. However, *Nashi*'s response suggests that the movement's commitment to the theme is so intense that the communicative forms used in this protest risk the content of their political message. In this case, it is in order to ask whether *Nashi* truly believes that it can demolish and remove the embassy building, or if it is sufficient that the audience believe it can accomplish such a goal.

This announcement was related to *Nashi*'s major anti-Estonian rally. The one-week blockade of the Estonian embassy in Moscow in late April and early May 2007 was followed by hundreds of anti-Estonian rallies in different parts of Russia over the course of that year. These rallies illustrate *Nashi*'s obvious willingness to identify itself as a true defender of Russia's national values, especially patriotism and the official narrative of Russia's "great history." However, from the viewpoint of the tension between didactics and stimulation, this "anti-Estonian intensity" explicitly challenges the balance between *Nashi*'s communicative demands. While the emotional commitment of the rallies was often expressed via *styob*-like elements (explicit stimulation), this pursuit challenges the limits of correctness linked to didactics. This balancing within the attempt to distinguish itself from official instances is present in the "ultimatum" from *Nashi*'s leader Vassili Yakemenko (the sample above is the first paragraph of it). What follows that slightly grotesque decontextualisation of the demolition/ removal action is the emotionally loaded request from all (citizens of Russia) to comment on and pay attention to this issue:

> Each citizen, no matter his or her position must answer the question: Has he or she done everything so that historical justice has been redressed. We must remember that if this [removal of the embassy] will be done, it will be an unconditional victory over neo-fascism, victory over trampling on memory. This act of political will by particular citizens, the leadership of the country as a whole, shall be the most important step for the further political and moral rebirth of Russia.[70]

While Yakemenko's vision of *Nashi* seems to be a re-fused community based upon Russia's national dignity, he clearly reserves a vanguard role for *Nashi* in this potential re-fusion by mentioning "certain citizens" (*Nashi*) before "the leadership of the country as a whole," and by demonstrating the movement's sacrificing position in relation to the political regime, as the rest of the report reveals:

> Collecting signatures for the support of OUR decision to demolish the embassy goes on. More than 100,000 Muscovites and guests of the capital have signed the ultimatum. Hundreds of thousands of Russians in tens of cities of the country – in Nizhny Novgorod, St. Petersburg, Penza, Volgograd, Krasnodar, and in many others – have joined the action.
>
> Today at approximately 4 pm, the commissar of the movement Nashi, Alexander Salikov, tore down the Estonian flag from the embassy building. This was a single initiative by Alexander, the appearance of his civic position and demonstration of his attitudes against the activities of the Estonian authorities. Alexander Salikov and also two of ours, Dmitry Olenin and Aleksei Smirnov, were arrested by the officers of the OMON and carried to the Presnenski militia department (Presnenskoe OVD). Ours were held in the militia department for more than three hours, and after that they were released. Each commissar received a 500-rouble fine due to the violation of administrative law. After three hours, more than 200 activists of the movements Nashi and Young Russia arrived, and after the release of the activists they all went back to demonstrate in the front of the embassy.

70 *Opredelena data demontazha.*

> The demonstration around the Estonian embassy has continued for five days around the clock. At the moment more than 250 activists from the movements Nashi, Young Russia, and Locals are attending the demonstration in the Malyi Kislovskiy Lane.[71]

The grotesque, *styob*-like headline of Yakemenko's ultimatum is strengthened by this description of *Nashi*'s persistence in collecting signatures for the ultimatum. The description follows *Nashi*'s common practice—evidenced by its numerous webpage reports on various themes—to blur its name ("ours") with the playing of the Russian possessive pronoun; the task of "Ours" is our (Russia's) task. In the second paragraph, the description of the arrest of the activists clearly draws its social and political value from the practice and discourse of the field of restricted cultural production – that is, a culture of practices that stand against official conformism. The civic position (*grazhdanskaya pozitsiya*) that *Nashi* generally represents according to the framework of the large-scale cultural production (respect toward law and order) is now contrasted with the self-denial of an activist. In other words, a true civic position is contrasted to formal laws. *Nashi*'s willingness to report on this incident in detail in terms of its civic position explicitly shows how *Nashi* potentially risks its own status as a pro-government and conformist movement. However in the following excerpt, the movement wants to remind the reader about this legal and conformist side of its activities:

> *(b) Unknown people threw stones at the Estonian embassy building*
>
> Last night an unknown person threw stones at the Estonian embassy building. As a result the glass of one window was damaged and two windows were cracked. According to participants, the stones were thrown by few people from the neighboring house. After seeing the hooligans, our commissars with activists from Young Russia and the Locals tried to catch them. However, the provocateurs could not be caught. The movement Nashi officially announces that our activists have nothing to do with

71 *Opredelena data demontazha.*

> this incident. We are not announcing the first time that we act according to the law exclusively.[72]

This report is strikingly different from the purposefulness of explaining the moral obligation to break laws in the name of protesting the violation of sacred national values (tearing down the Estonian flag on the territory of the embassy). In all probability, the reporting of a stereotypical act of hooliganism (throwing stones) – no matter by whom – offers *Nashi* an opportunity to compensate its relatively unrestrained, and presumably stimulative, nationalistic sentiments by making a reminder of its engagement on the official side of society. It follows that in this episode *Nashi*'s highly emphasized symbolism seemingly causes effects that risk its own position as a movement loyal to the Kremlin and official policies. In addition, *Nashi* risks its position as a serious movement, as "the ultimatum of the demolition/removal of the Estonian embassy building according to the law" illustrates. The intention to keep this ultimatum alive is realized through *styob*-like activities, for example, by erecting stands for posters in various areas onto which local people can write or draw their anti-Estonian comments. These stands were guarded by *Nashi* "commissars" wearing World War II-era Red Army uniforms.[73] In probably the clearest example of full parody, *Nashi* urged local people in the town of Kovrov to ask whether they were infected by "the horrible virus called eSStonian fascism," and then cordially announced that "the majority of Kovrovians were not infected, and did not need antifascist vaccination."[74]

The first big challenge for *Nashi*'s persistent interest in the Bronze Soldier theme was to redeem the explicitly emotion-laden ultimatum to demolish/remove the Estonian embassy building from its current location. At the deadline of the ultimatum, Russia's Independence Day on June 12, 2007, *Nashi* made public the following report:

---

72 *Neizvestnye zabrosali kamnyami zdanie estonskogo posol'stva* (published May 3, 2007, 06:46), available at http://nashi.su/news/17142 (accessed October 27, 2010).

73 *Vladimir: Lyudi gotovy k piketirovaniyu*, May 1, 2007, available at http://nashi.su/news/17143 (accessed October 27, 2010).

74 *Kovrov: Spasatel'nyi—ukol eSStonskogo fashizma,* May 28, 2007, available at http://nashi.su/news/18436 (accessed March 2, 2010).

(c) Let it stand. So far…

More than a month ago the statue of the Soviet soldier-liberator was removed in Tallinn. A part of Estonian society—only a part—stood against this by active protests. Defenders of the statue were killed and thrown into jail, but still fascist Estonian authorities managed to receive victory. The statue was destroyed and the grave of the fallen buried under the monument defamed.

During protests around the Estonian embassy, we suggested to demolish the Estonian embassy building and to remove it to a distant district of Moscow in order that it will not disfigure the historical outlook of the capital. We approached authorities of all levels. We asked thousands of people. However, it seems only few people in the society are ready to forcefully defend the memory of the fallen as well as stand against reinterpretations of the Second World War. And, in order to avoid even deeper division in the society, it was decided not to start the demolition on the date that was announced.

Fascist authorities in Estonia decided to remove the statue—and they removed it. In Moscow, however, the fascist embassy still stands; so far. As a symbol of not-readiness, many people agree that the memory of the fallen is sacred. As a warning of our indecision and inconsistence in many things concerning our country and the great pages of its history, due to the 1990s, that will disturb us in the future, as well, when we defend our Motherland not only in big things, but in small things, too. And it necessarily becomes the guarantee of defeats in the future, not only of our conscience but of our memory, as well.

Let it stand. So far.[75]

Despite the serious international consequences of this episode, not only between Russia and Estonia but also between Russia and the European Union,[76] nothing as absurd as demolishing and removing the Estonian embassy

75 *Pust' stoit. Poka…,* June 12, 2007, available at http://nashi.su/news/19015 (accessed October 27, 2010).

76 Hiski Haukkala, "Poliittisen ja institutionaalisen solidaarisuuden rooli Viron ja Venäjän välisessä patsaskiistassa. Näkökulma: Pronssisoturin pitkä varjo – muistin politiikkaa ja kansallista uhoa" (Marko Lehti, Matti Jutila, Markku Jokisipilä, Jussi Lassila, Hiski

was likely to happen. Especially in terms of the original ultimatum, in which the issue was not only about the demolition and removal of the embassy in metaphorical terms, but principally the demolition/removal of the embassy building. Furthermore, although the European Union largely condemned Russia's official reaction, during the peak of the episode one can find critique toward *Nashi* from instances of Russia's official voices, as well. On May 7, 2007, the Russian analytical pro-governmental journal *Ekspert* explicitly criticized Russia's "unsystematic," "pathetic," and "ineffective" response to Estonia's defamation of "our sacred values" and attempts "to demolish the Yalta world order by turning Russia the liberator into Russia the aggressor." "Hooligan activities by the representatives of *Nashi*" were mentioned as a concrete example of this failed response.[77] That is no wonder since no matter what *Nashi*'s ultimate goals in its ultimatum were, the fact that the embassy remained where it was (an outcome that was more than predictable) meant *Nashi* suffered a symbolic loss.[78]

Consequently, this loss must be redeemed somehow. This redemption was done by showing *Nashi*'s self-denial and persistence in setting a goal of organizing hundreds of rallies. Although this goal was not achieved, *Nashi*'s failure was projected onto others by using a blatantly Soviet sounding account, according to which only a part of the Estonian society[79] actively pro-

Haukkala), *Kosmopolis: The Finnish Review of Peace and Conflict Research* 3 (2007):78-86), 59-86; and "The role of political and solidarity in the statue- debate between Estonia and Russia. A viewpoint: The long shadow of the Bronze Soldier – Memory politics and national bluster," *Kosmopolis: The Finnish Review of Peace and Conflict Research*, 59-86.

77 "Novaya Yalta" (*Ekspert*, May 7, 2007).

78 Interestingly, despite "the official voice of the Kremlin," the newspaper Rossiiskaya Gazeta (RG), wrote intensively about the Bronze Soldier from a highly patriotic point of view during the peak of the episode (119 articles in which the word "Estonia" was mentioned between April 15 and June 15, 2007), but referred to *Nashi*'s activities only twice. The first was an article about *Nashi*'s ultimatum and "patriotic persistence" ("*Nashi*" fakty na ikh argument," May 3, 2007 and the second was an article about *Nashi*'s demonstration for the release of its activist Mark Siryk "Nash Mark – Akciya," May 5, 2007. There were no mentions after the deadline of the ultimatum. Thus, although RG's rare mentions of *Nashi* show its clear support, the small number of overall mentions suggests that *Nashi* did not have a special role in the general patriotic response that this episode launched.

79 This view implies that Estonia would be still part of Russia without mentioning Estonia's demographic division between Estonian and Russian-speaking people, and without specifying who was actually for and against the removal of the Bronze Soldier in Estonia.

tested the removal, and then by accusing all of Russian society. Thus, *Nashi* first wanted to highlight its intention to defy the "conformist integration" of society by bravely protesting against the defamation of society's memory. However, the actual symbolic loss (the failure of the ultimatum) is redeemed by pointing out that *Nashi* did not conduct this ultimatum because it did not want society to become even more fragmented. In the last paragraph *Nashi* moves back to showing the experienced injustice and "imbalance" by repeating the bluster of the headline but also reminding *Nashi*'s consciousness of potential, subsequent violations of Russia's values. Now *Nashi* clearly speaks from its "independently constructed didactic position" that presumably allows warning society regarding its passivity, as a legacy of the 1990s, in terms of the witnessed and potentially forthcoming defamations of "our Motherland."

The important aspect in this redemption of symbolic loss, as well as in later anti-Estonian rallies and reports, is the use of innocent victims. According to Randall Collins,[80] these victims must not only be innocent, but must also be emblems of the movement's dedication or be quickly converted into such emblematic material. This is vividly present in the beginning of the sample above, in which *Nashi* blatantly inflates the consequences for the part of Estonia that defended the statue by arguing in the past tense passive that "the defenders of the statue were killed and thrown into jail." The latter statement is more or less true despite its propagandistic tone. The Estonian authorities did arrest hundreds of people during "the Bronze night," but only one confirmed human loss took place, the death of a Russian-speaking Estonian student, Dmitry Ganin.[81] Ganin's death received wide publicity in the Russian media, but *Nashi* was the vanguard in terms of his martyrdom. By September 2009, 150 reports could be found on *Nashi*'s website using the search word "Ganin." In many of these reports – following the ritual-like strategy – Dmitry Ganin was explicitly re-fused with victims of the Great Patriotic War. The following report from the city of Tula, published on the first anniversary of Ganin's death, is an example of this:

80 Randall Collins, "Social Movements and the Focus of Emotional Attention," in *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements*, 27-44, 33.

81 Bronze Night, available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bronze_Night (accessed May 15, 2011); Dmitri Ganin, available at http://fi.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dmitri_Ganin (accessed March 2, 2010); see also Bronze night.

(d) Tula: Commemoration Day of Dmitry Ganin

> Today commissars of the movement Nashi gathered on Victory Square to lay flowers at the statue for the fallen in the wars. Exactly a year ago, Dmitry Ganin was killed in Tallinn when he was defending the honor of Russia and the memory of the heroes who fought in the Great Patriotic War. Youth gathered on the square to take part in the mourning event dedicated to the anniversary of his death.
>
> We have not forgotten the events in Estonia. We continue to collect signatures for the "Bronze book" against the "black lists." We won't surrender but, on the contrary, will become more confident day by day of our justness. History cannot be rewritten. The Bronze Soldier, despite standing no more in Tõnismägi Square, will always remind of the country that beat fascism.[82]

Ganin's death brilliantly illustrates the importance that innocent victims have for many social movements, and how these victims become martyrs. This occurs because the victims are taken to represent the moral power of the movement. They symbolize the feeling that the movement will ultimately win out.[83] For *Nashi*, actively protesting for Mark Siryk,[84] one of *Nashi*'s Estonian–Russian activists, who was arrested and charged in the Bronze Night riot, illustrated this power of being right. However, Ganin intensifies this feeling because for *Nashi*, he proved the justness of its cause by his death, and thus he functions as an ideal martyr. In this regard, the important dimension in Ganin's martyrdom is its link to *Nashi*'s platform of emotional commitment and ritual-like re-fusion. From *Nashi*'s viewpoint Ganin's death can be naturally refused with the sacred memory of the fallen of "The Great Patriotic War" and the honor of the country, as well as the Russian youth. One also sees a change in *Nashi*'s persistence on this theme after the failed ultimatum for the removal of embassy—and *Nashi*'s reorganization. Now *Nashi* collects signa-

82 *Tula: Den' pamiati Dmitriya Ganina*, April 26, 2008, available at http://nashi.su/news/24286(accessed March 3, 2010).
83 Randall Collins, "Social Movements," 32-33.
84 In the latest version of *Nashi*'s website, one could find eighteen reports about the case of Mark Siryk.

tures for a special "Bronze book" that is somewhat the counterpart for Estonia's black lists for *Nashi* activists travelling to the Schengen area.[85]

Conclusions

Nashi's political discourse can be approached in terms of challenges that arise when a state-conformist and regime-maintaining social movement tries to conduct a "ritual-like strategy à l'Orange" in the context of post-Orange Russia. That is, the creation of a community that was able to accomplish its ultimate goal: changing the regime. Hence, for *Nashi*, the central challenge is how to transform the political glory of an oppositional force into a political glory of existing political conformism around official policies. In this vein, *Nashi*'s discourse can be defined as an attempt for a distinctive conformism. This article has examined the question with the help of Bourdieu's fields of cultural production, which suggest that the felicity of a particular style used by a habitus depends on the habitus' position in a particular field. In this respect, a relevant Russian counterpart for *Nashi* is one of its major opponents, the National Bolshevik Party (see Stanovaya's classification above), during *Nashi*'s early years. The National Bolshevik Party (NBP) has appeared as one of the most scandalous, controversial, but also aesthetically well-known youth movements in post-Soviet Russia. The National Bolsheviks have largely received their reputation – not least by the creativity of their leader, writer Eduard Limonov – through various theatrical performances and actions, and this is partially due to the fact that there is no ideological or "substantive" catechism that would explain the political guidelines of the NBP.[86]

In terms of political style, this means that the NBP's sovereign position in the oppositional field, that is the field of restricted cultural production, allows almost any kind of combination for the sake of symbolic capital. Whereas NBP activity appears in the periphery in relation to the conformist center, it can be assumed that the accumulation of the NBP's symbolic capital can be strengthened by its illegitimacy in the field of large-scale cultural production. As

85 *Molodezh: sub'ekt ili ob'ekt, vot v chem vopros*, January 31, 2008, available at http://www. *Nashi*.su/news/23216 (accessed October 27, 2010).
86 Mikhail Sokolov, "Nacional-Bolshevistskaya partiya," 147.

Mikhail Sokolov[87] continues, "politics for the NBP is principally a form of creative self-expression that allows simultaneous and effective use, for instance, of Nazi-officer Ernst Röhm or Che Guevara in terms of maintaining old, and mobilizing new supporters." In short, the whole political style and image of the NBP can be seen as an emphatic mockery of its enemies and exaggeration of goals by "overidentifying" and "decontextualizing" them. Although such *styob*-like strategy risks the reputation of the movement as well, the NBP's position guarantees its success for the movement. While there is an explicit link to the Kremlin policies in *Nashi*'s political position – totally unlike the NBP – it seems that it is *Nashi*'s didactic position that is "water" for the potential "fire" of youth culture resonating political aesthetization (stimulation).

The Bronze Soldier is an illuminating case of these challenges in *Nashi*'s political discourse. Regarding the growing patriotic and nationalistic sentiments in Russia's public opinion during the last ten years,[88] along with the large-scale apoliticalness of youth, it becomes partially understandable why *Nashi* uses so much energy for promoting patriotism.There is a clear patriotic potential in the population, among youth in particular, and this potential must be utilized. For *Nashi*, however, as a conductor of official policies, the main problem is how this potential could be utilized within the creation a cogent public image for the movement. This article has argued that this challenge can be conceptualized as a tension between state-didactics and youth culture stimulation that *Nashi* attempts to re-fuse. Oleg and Vadim's views on *Nashi* in terms of "true youth movements" – that is, youth movements in which activities are not disturbed by adult practices in the implementation of official policies – support this attempt.

Nashi's supposedly profitable communicative strategy to re-fuse these defused social powers is an adaptation of *styob*. In the light of effects to the public image of the pro- Kremlin youth movements, it seems that style is seen ultimately independent in relation to political contents. That is, *styob* appears purely as an expressive tool, a form of "political technology," on the basis of

87 *Ibid.*

88 Boris Dubin 2001, "Zapad, granica, osobyi put'"; Boris Dubin 2004, "Krovovaya" voyna i "velikaya" pobeda"; Lev Gudkov 2002, "Russkii neotradicionalizm i soprotivlenie peremenam"; and Lev Gudkov and Boris Dubin 2006, "Est' li perspektiva u russkogo natsionalizma?"

models that have been used in totally different political positions (the Orange side in Ukraine, or NBP's carnivalistic fascism in Russia). Regarding the potential effects that *styob*-like strategies have caused for the public image of pro-Kremlin groups, and partially for the conditions of their sustainability, there seems to be a lack of self-reflection in their political communication. The *styob* of *Nashi*'s predecessor, *Idushchie vmeste*, within its book campaign against few famous Russian writers in the name of freedom of expression and for the sake of "correct moral values" led to consequences that were opposite to those desired and intended. They included disassociation by the Kremlin and the growing popularity of the accused writers.[89]

Consequently, *Nashi*'s outrage toward the demolition/removal of the Bronze Soldier was converted into an absurd ultimatum for the demolition of the Estonian embassy, as well as for creating new emblems of Russian patriotism and nationalism, celebrating the martyrs linked to the event, and later suggesting various officials rename streets for these martyrs.[90] It is obvious that *Nashi*'s *styob*-like activities around the Bronze Soldier were not valued arguments against the political elite's decision to reorganize *Nashi* in early 2008. Or, these activities were one of the central reasons for the reorganization, since *Nashi*'s bad image had become, in part and from an international perspective, Russia's bad image.[91]In practice, this reorganization meant the shutdown of the majority of *Nashi*'s regional sections.[92] Recently, *Nashi*'s active sub-organization Stal', which has become the somewhat active or even follower of *Nashi*, was responsible for the scandalous installation of "impaled enemies of Russia" in the annual pro-Kremlin youth summer camp in 2010.[93]

89 "Idushchie Vmeste" zashli slishkom daleko…," Radiomaiak.ru, available at http://old.radiomayak.ru/archive/text?stream=society&item=1361 (accessed August 11, 2009); and "Pisateli i Minkul'tury kritikuyut akciyu "Idushchikh vmeste" po obmenu "vrednye" knigi na "poleznye," Newsru.com, January 21, 2002, available at http://www.newsru.com/russia/21Jan2002/knigi.html (accessed March 2, 2010).

90 *Uvekovechim pamiat' o geroe,* June 6, 2007, available at http://www.nashi.su/news/18719 (accessed March 3, 2010).

91 "*Nashi*" stali chuzhimi," *Kommersant*, January 29, 2008, available at http://www.kommersant.ru/doc.aspx?DocsID=846635 (accessed October 27, 2010).

92 "*Nashi*" stali chuzhimi," *Kommersant*, January 29, 2008; "*Nashi*sty" ukhodyat tikho," Fontanka.ru, January 28, 2008, available at http://www.fontanka.ru/2008/01/28/053/print.html (accessed October 27, 2010).

93 The issue is about Stal's installation "The Enemies of the Nation" (Vragi naroda), an alley framed by impaled portraits of "anti-Russian" politicians and officials. As a result,

Nashi's political discourse can be seen as a failed ritual-like strategy in its goal to create a convincing youth movement on the basis of emerged Russian patriotism. On the one hand, the most stimulative aspect of this discourse—an adaptation of *styob*—can be interpreted as *Nashi*'s sense to carry out distinctive but politically correct youth patriotism, since its use might redeem its ap propriateness as a youth culture practice from the viewpoint of adults. On the other hand, since these strategies appear as politically incorrect, seemingly associated with unrestrained nationalism, it is worth suggesting that pro-Kremlin youth movements truly struggle with cogent expressions for their political ideologies. This opens a broader question of the limits of appropriateness in Russia's civil society, not in the sense of opposing the official policies, but of promoting pro-state ideas in particular.

Western companies sponsoring the 2010-camp, including Daimler AG and Tupperware, announced that they would not sponsor the camp if similar incidents occurred in the future. In addition, the presidential commission for the development of civil society urged Yakemenko—acting as the head of federal youth affairs since 2008—to explain this incident regarding the theme of the camp in 2010: "Youth issues instead of global ideological missions, such as the fight against Orange Revolution." Yakemenko relativized the issue of "youth issues" by pointing out that "for many young people, the falsification of the memory of the Great Patriotic War is a problem." See "Zapadnye kompanii otkrestilis'ot foruma "Seliger," Grani.Ru, September 14, 2010, available at http://www.grani.ru/Politics/Russia/m.181675.html, (accessed 27.10.2010); "29-ia stat'ia Konstitucii ne narushena (published 28.7.2010, 23:40), available at http://nashi.su/news/32520 (accessed October 27, 2010).

5 Russian Radical Nationalist Interpretation of the French Riots of November 2005

Lukasz Jurczyszyn, Pultusk Academy of Humanities, Poland

This article is based on a larger comparative research concerning the riots in France, Russia, and Poland analyzed as a "test" for a local social environment. The investigation, which took place between December 2005 and July 2010, was first of all a part of a doctoral thesis in sociology prepared at the School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (*École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales - EHESS*) in Paris. It also concerns a project called "Understanding Violence in Russia: War, Institutions, Society."[1] Therefore from the beginning, one of the main motivations behind the investigation was to go beyond strict national research frameworks and to reach more "global" perspectives by analyzing three societies that are not usually compared.

In order to present the main theme of this article, the overall context of this comparative research must be outlined first. The research was framed around two types of collective violence:

1) Social violence, specifically the riots in the Paris suburbs that took place in Val-Fourré in November 2005 (Mantes-la-Jolie, Yvelines, 22,000 residents, situated about 55 km from Paris) compared to those that occurred in Villiers-le-Bel in November 2007 (Val-d'Oise, 27,000 residents, about 25 km from Paris).
2) Nationalist/racist violence involving, in both the Russian and Polish cases, members of the ethnic majorities (including radical nationalists) against ethnic minorities. First are riots in Kondopoga (Republic of Ka-

1 The three-year project (2010-2012), which the City Hall of Paris funds, is held by the researchers from the Centre for the Russian Studies (CERCEC – EHESS/CNRS).

relia,[2] 34,000 residents, situated about 300 km from St. Petersburg), where in September 2006 young Chechens "exploded" into violence against young Russians, killing two of them. This led to four-day riot conducted by young Russians, including ultra-nationalists, against "Caucasians" (destruction of restaurants, shops, and cars, generally demanding their expulsion from the town, which took place), and against the local authorities (clashes with state police). In Nizhny Novgorod (1,300,000 residents, Russia's fourth-largest city, located about 400 km from Moscow) one of the ultimate objectives was to examine collective violence: racist (including homicides of migrants committed by radical nationalists) and those that resulted from confrontation between ultra-nationalist and anti-racist youth movements. In this town, racist violence provoked the violent reaction of young so-called "anti-racists" (in Russia, more commonly defined as "anti-fascists") who have for the last four years been using weapons such as knifes and pistols. In Poland, the research sought to understand the collective violence in Brzeg (38,000 residents, located in the Opole Voivodeship), where in January 2008 a young Roma "exploded" into a violent act against several young Polish citizens of this small town. This "unexpected" defensive violence met an extreme reaction of the crowd of about 40 young people, who wanted to burn the Roma's apartment using Molotov cocktails.

This article is based on the analysis of empirical data collected during eight months of fieldwork in the provincial town of Kondopoga, in St. Petersburg, and in Nizhny Novgorod. During this period, 56 individual and sixteen collective interviews were conducted. The two most productive methods were participative observation in groups of radical youth (four months in Kondopoga and two months in Nizhny Novgorod) and focus groups (two in Kondopoga and two in Nizhny Novgorod). The approach of four focus groups was inspired by some fundamental objectives of the sociological intervention method, which the French sociologist Alain Touraine[3] invented in order to analyze social movements. This qualitative method is designed as an analytical

2 Russia is a federation that consists of 83 federal subjects (members of the federation): 21 republics, 46 provinces, nine territories, one autonomous province, four autonomous districts, and two federal cities (Moscow and St. Petersburg).

3 Alain Touraine, *La voix et le regard*, Paris, Le Seuil, 1978.

process by which collective actors are enabled to accede to certain forms of self-awareness. Focus groups seemed pertinent in order to analyze collective social action such as riots, racist attacks, and activities resulting from engagement in a socio-cultural movement (nationalist or anti-racist). More precisely, the main goal of the focus groups was not only to distinguish the meaning of a collective action and to test the hypothesis among actors, but also to enable social and auto-reflection, and action beyond the physical violence. The participants of such constructed groups were recruited from the subjects who had been already questioned in the context of an individual or collective interview. All of them were also related and situated in the actual local conflict. Nevertheless the subjects, who presented exceedingly radical confrontation attitudes, were not taken into account. For instance, in Kondopoga the researchers established a unique space for a debate between the members of ethnic minorities (Uzbeks/Kyrgyz and Chechens), the local officials, and the youth, including those who had participated in the racist riots. Then in Nizhny Novgorod, one focus group was held to stimulate an exceptional dialogue between nine people related to the research question. They mostly situated themselves in opposition to the local authorities: two National Bolsheviks (National Bolshevik Party - NBP), two anarchists from Autonomous Action (*Avtonomnoe Deystvie* - AD), representatives of the Georgian and Tajik minorities, delegates of *Drugaya Rossiya* and *Intersoyuz*, the head of the Council of Human Rights in Nizhny Novgorod, and the head of the Help Center for Migrants. In the frame of the other focus group in this town, one radical nationalist and his “anti-racist” opponent were also questioned. In this case, the local “adversaries” who took part in the research wanted, “to try to understand why nowadays in Russia the young radical people have been progressively killing themselves instead of thinking and acting together against the social and institutional violence.” (Vovka, 22 years old, conservatory student, a local ultra-nationalist leader)

According to the main theme of this article, the empirical investigation in Kondopoga and Nizhny Novgorod pointed to a main result related to the media, developed due to this comparative research. More precisely, the importance of “global” factors linked to collective violence in these urban spaces was observed. The phenomenon could be called “global circulation of national im-

aginaries." Indeed, it was detected that the riots of November 2005 in France, due to their widespread international media coverage, became a source for various interpretations for the (more or less organized) Russian ultra-nationalists. In terms of media coverage of the riots, once it started in France in November/December 2005, it spread abroad. The different forms of the French *national imaginary* produced in France by French public opinion makers in the context of riots were then received and interpreted by Russian information producers. Then again it was received and interpreted by the interlocutors from Kondopoga, St. Petersburg, and Nizhny Novgorod. To clarify, it specifically seems that the French national imaginary of "urban violence of dangerous youth from the suburbs," who during the riots were regularly represented on French television and in the majority of the newspapers as "immigrant/criminals," influenced the interpretation of the riots that several Russian opinion makers and radical nationalists framed in terms of "the threat of dangerous immigrants for the majority of society." In other words, the global circulation of national imaginaries refers to a mechanism according to which the Russian nationalists actually interpret the French riots of November 2005 from the Russian context of nationalist and racist tensions. To some extent, the interviewed leaders of the nationalist/racist riots of Kondopoga in 2006 justified their actions by referring to the French riots in 2005. They generally wanted and would like to avoid the catastrophic example of European migration policy. In that case, the Russian ultra-nationalists consider themselves to be experiencing the same danger as the majority of French society, which to them is being menaced by immigrants with North and Sub-Saharan African backgrounds. The notion of global circulation of national imaginaries was inspired by two major concepts: 1) imagined communities in the era of cultural globalization "on the move" that Arjun Appadurai has proposed[4]; and 2) national imaginary developed by Benedict Anderson.[5]

4 Arjun Appadurai, Modernity at large: cultural dimensions of globalization, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

5 Benedict Anderson, Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism, London, Verso, 1983.

The French Riots of November 2005

Before giving the examples of interpretation of the French riots established by the Russian radical nationalists from the two studied urban spaces, it is crucial to give certain details concerning the "real" context and significations of these acts of violence. The French riots of November 2005, which are at the heart of this comparative problem, had an impact that had never occurred in the contemporary history of France. The riots began on Thursday, October 27, spurred by the deaths of two teenagers (Zyed Benna, 17, and Bouna Traoré, 15) in Clichy-sous-Bois, a poor commune in an eastern Paris suburb. They ended on November 16, 2005. In fact, it was a series of riots in nearly 280 communes in various parts of France involving mainly the burning of cars and public buildings. Thus, a state of emergency was declared on November 8, 2005.[6] On November16, Parliament extended it by three months.

First of all, the riots had neither ethnic nor religious character. In spite of the fact that the majority of the rioters had immigrant backgrounds and a significant portion of them suffered from racial discrimination, especially in employment, the collective violence of November 2005 in France had social significations. They have been part of the landscape of social unrest characteristic of several major French cities since the early 1980s. This social violence concerns so-called "difficult" or "underprivileged" youth (from 14 to 30 years old) who are residents of working class districts. These youth face various difficulties -- socio-economic, educational, family, and personal. Some of them are capable of becoming actors of collective violence, and others are already "known" to local police. They have been and are still the subject of numerous sociological studies, such as those conducted by French sociologists Stéphane Beaud and Michel Pialoux. Basing the investigation on an emblematic case of a riot in a district of Montbéliard in July 2000, the authors highlighted the social significance of French urban violence. Namely, they established a correlation between the huge increase in unemployment and impoverishment inside these districts, the process of deconstruction of working classes, and the reappearance of the urban riots[7]. Furthermore, the location

6 Véronique Le Goaziou et Laurent Mucchielli, Quand les banlieues brûlent…Retour sur les émeutes de novembre 2005, Paris, La Découverte, 2006.

7 Stéphane Beaud, Michel Pialoux, *Violences urbaines, violences sociales : genèse des nouvelles classes dangereuses*, Paris, Hachette Littératures, 2005.

of the riots of autumn 2005 indicates that the acts of violence occurred mainly in the areas officially classified as "Sensitive Urban Zones" (*Zones Urbaines Sensibles* - ZUS). Here, very large families of North and Sub-Saharan African backgrounds live, the median income is less than national average, and young people often suffer from educational and professional failure.[8]

The survey, which was not only on the urban violence of November 2005 (precisely in Val-Fourré), but also concerned the riots in November 2007 in Villiers-le-Bel, has demonstrated a very important phenomenon of disconnection, especially of young violent actors from the institutional actors charged with ensuring social order. On the other hand, the residents of two studied districts often justified this social violence as the mechanism that was expressed by the acceptance of the riots in their signification as a "primitive revolt." More precisely, according to an idea proposed by the French sociologist Didier Lapeyronnie,[9] the riots are an illegal, unorganized expression that tries to achieve some political goals in the public sphere, aimed at finishing with the silent degradation of the local social environment.

"Kondopoga – Town of Heroes:" The Desire to Avoid the "French Catastrophe"

The riots in Kondopoga, "the town of heroes" as several interlocutors called it, represented the biggest nationalist/racist riots in the contemporary history of the Russian Federation and also received widespread international media coverage. It is crucial to underscore that the local migrants face regular racial discrimination in employment, social institutions, and even collective violence -- namely the attacks of the former parachutists, including ordinary residents in 1998 and 2003, on the local market where migrants mainly work[10]. Such everyday racial discrimination is not represented in the media (especially in Russia) at a level like the riots were. In this context, several phenomenons exist: nationalist and racist tendencies among a significant part of population,

8 Hugues Lagrange, Marco Oberti (dir.), *Émeutes urbaines et protestations. Une singularité française*, Paris, Presses de Sciences Po, 2006.

9 Didier Lapeyronnie, "Révolte primitive dans les banlieues françaises. Essai sur les émeutes de l'automne 2005", *Déviance et Société*, 2006, Vol. 30, nº 4, p. 431-448.

10 Lukasz Jurczyszyn, Urban violence. The Comparaison: France, Russia, Poland, Ph.D. dissertation, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris, 2011.

the weakness of local civil society, and the inability of local authorities to guarantee public safety (constantly noted in surveys as "being closed" to citizens). The radical nationalists and members of the Movement Against Illegal Immigration, who came from Moscow to achieve their political goals, instrumentalized these phenomenons.

Several individuals, defined as "radical nationalists" and who are concerned by the research question in Kondopoga, represent several actors of the nationalist/racist riots of September 2006 and those of the attacks on the local market in 1998 and 2003. Indeed, comparisons were made between the local riots and those that occurred in France in November 2005. These social actors interpreted the French urban violence according to their social experience, which is linked to racial tensions developed in the local context. Roma (his nickname but not an indicator of ethnic identity, 36 years old, independent trader), when he was asked about the riots in Kondopoga and the reasons for his involvement in two nationalist/racist attacks on the market, at first mentioned that he was "against the presence of immigrants in Russia." Then he used an "international" argument to justify his action by comparing the tensions and violence in Russia with those that occurred in France: "I realize that the politicians follow the overall tendency and everywhere there is a huge problem with immigration. In France, there is a real catastrophe. This is a war, you know that. We need to avoid such riots in our country." In a similar way, Anatoli (37 years, power engineer, nationalist activist), who is a local informal representative of the Movement Against Illegal Immigration, compared the mentality of the "Caucasians" with the collective imaginary of persons of African backgrounds living in France to explain the riots appeared locally:

> I think that the 'Caucasians' behave as the 'Africans' or 'Arabs' do in France. They feel the weakness of the French population and they want to conquer the country. We have the same situation here. But if the 'Caucasians' meet with the powerful resistance they calm down.

Analysis of the television report "Kondopoga - Russian revolt"

As a part of the survey led in Kondopoga, a television report was identified and analyzed. "Kondopoga - Russian revolt," a special edition of the program "One on Two" (Odin na dvox, Regional Television REN TV, broadcast on September 10, 2006),[11] where one can observe that social actors themselves practice and produce an international comparison. Two producers of the program, Denis Litov and Igor Muratov, who express its ideological line, can be defined as nationalist and anti-liberal. They compare the riots in Kondopoga with those that took place in the French suburbs in 2005. Two weeks after the riots these producers made a special edition of their program, a television report, presenting the testimonies of residents and interviews with the Russian radical nationalists, including Aleksandr Belov, former leader of the Movement Against Illegal Immigration (DPNI). From his point of view, the riots of 2005 in France presented a "negative destructive example of migration policy in Western Europe."[12] To summarize the extract of this reportage, it contains xenophobic (anti-immigration), racist (against "Arabs"), anti-democratic, and anti-liberal statements, with several manipulated parallels between two riots. At first, the authors analyzed the French riots in misguided terms of the religious and ethnic conflict. Then they underlined the threat of Islam and more generally the threat of cultural difference with the "cheap immigrant working force." From the Russian perspective, such parallels are related to the religion of several populations from the Caucasus (mostly Chechens) and Central Asia.

The Radical Nationalists from Nizhny Novgorod

During two months in Nizhny Novgorod (May – June 2010), the researchers undertook participant observation of two radical movements, one ultra-nationalist and the other anti-racist, in order to analyze the violent confrontation. The first group, defined as "radical nationalist" or "ultra-nationalist," contains around 400 individuals aged between 13 and 35 years of age. This ex-

11 Available on DVD and on the program website: www.2-1.ru.

12 "Kondopoga - Russian revolt", the special edition of program One on two (in Russian: "Odin na dvox", Regional Television REN TV, broadcast on September 10, 2006, available at http://www.2-1.ru.

tremely heterogeneous group incorporates the following components: a small number of neo-Nazi skinheads (including ex-neo-Nazi skinheads), former activists of the National Bolshevik Party (NBP - also known as *Nazbol*) who left the structure of the NBP because of ideological change and the split in 2005 between Eduard Limonov and Aleksandr Dugin (most part of these individuals had found it too "democratic" and "liberal," or not sufficiently nationalistic), local activists of the Movement Against Illegal Immigration (DPNI), many who defined themselves as "authentic Russian nationalists" or simply as "rightwing" (these auto-identifications are the most recurrent locally), "rightwing football fans" (FKNN local football club), and the "rightwing ideologues." More precisely, the observations within the group of radical nationalists took place on the occasion of several events such as: their local life (parties and everyday activities in the several districts of the city), the rehearsal of a hardcore music band "SS" (*Second Sight*) constituted of former neo-Nazi skinheads, a "Ska" music concert of ultra-nationalists groups, and three football matches of the FKNN (an informal bastion of local radical nationalists and the manifestation of the Movement Against Illegal Immigration) organized as a form of solidarity for the Russian miners. According to the analysis of the anti-racist movement, it is important to underline that to the contrary of the majority of representations in Russian and foreign media, it represents a very heterogeneous group (around 80 individuals, aged between 13 and 30 years). It contains the following elements: the anarchists grouped within Autonomous Action, the SHARPs (Skinheads Against Racial Prejudice), the RASHs (Red and Anarchist Skinheads), the "pure" anti-racists, punk/hardcore-rockers, and ecologists.

The empirical work indicates that several local radical nationalists referred to the French riots, occasionally in a quite elaborated form as shown in the case of Vovka (22 years old, convservatory student), one of the leaders of local ultra-nationalists:

> Europe has managed to kill itself. Its governments have let the huge flow of migrants in. I do not think that the riots conducted by the Arabs are a normal thing. I reckon that they do not have the right to do such things. If they are in France they should behave like guests. We have a lot of similar problems. It is the same problem with the 'ethnic question'

> but namely we have a problem with the Caucasians and recently with the Chinese, and they have their problem with the Arabs and Blacks. I do not think so that everything is all right. I do not think that the white population accepts it in a peaceful way. Maybe I am wrong and the mentality of the Europeans is different. But I would not accept such a mess made by foreigners. (...) But if we talk about the reasons, I remember that the policemen did something first. I think that in the same way as here, the youth are in the conflict with the police. But on the other side, the conflict should be there because the Arabs and Blacks are responsible for the majority of crimes.

The other interviewed radical nationalist, Vadim (22 years old, security guard), is an activist of the Movement Against Illegal Immigration (DPNI). He interpreted the French riots within a typical Russian context mechanism of the criminalization of ethnic minorities:

> I understand very well what is going on in France. I have seen the riots on TV. It is cultural conflict and I do not want it in Russia. (...) The Blacks want to fight for their living space. In the past, the French had courage to steal the land of the Black" in Africa. What I mean is colonization. But the French have recently become too weak. It is a big mistake. (...) They cannot be even called 'Blacks.' They have lost their ethnic identity, therefore they have become an 'incomprehensible substance' more or less linked to the criminal world from the ghettos. The difference with the Russian context is that the Russians do not indulge the mess made by foreigners like the French do. (...) Our organization [DPNI] is for a normal liberal democracy where the power is in the hands of the majority and not of the minority.

The case of Viktor (25 years old, employee at a funeral home, former neo-Nazi skinhead, current FKNN "rightwing football fan") represents a common practice among the nineteen locally interviewed ultra-nationalists. When he was asked about the French riots, he started to compare them to Russian tensions related to the general presence of the migrants in the city and in the country:

> The French have invited all people from their former colonies. Now, I can see only one solution in that kind of situation. No immigrants, no problems. If they [the immigrants] want to come to our country and our authorities have nothing against it, they can come. But once they are here they should behave in a pleasant way. They should become Orthodox and they should start working and not abuse social welfare. (…) Generally once the immigrants are here we respect their opinions but they should pronounce them in a public space in their country and not here. The riots showed that it was too late to decrease the number of immigrants in the country. The French authorities should have measured the limits of the immigration in more realistic way. In Russia, in my opinion, the immigrants will ruin the country, as the government will. They [the officials] let them in. (…) I do not think that the similar riots will emerge in Russia because our immigrants are not so poor as the French are. Here, they work on in construction or they clean up our streets. They realize that if they start messing around they will be expelled from this country and they will lose the opportunity to earn a living. There are no good jobs in their countries.

Concluding emphasis should be put on the fact that in the majority of cases, the interpretation of the French riots of November 2005, established by several radical nationalists from Kondopoga and Nizhny Novgorod, was encouraged by our comparative approach. Nevertheless, from a methodological point of view, it was due to that kind of approach that the overall result was obtained. In this "global era," through their *spectatorial experience* as the French sociologist Éric Macé[13] calls it, social actors "observe" themselves worldwide via the media. This research shows that the media plays a decisive role in the situation of weakness or absence not only of politicians, but also of social actors close to citizens, especially youth. The media intervenes in an extremely influential and massive way in social and cultural imaginary, and actions within the social environment. In spite of government control of the main media outlets, especially television, Russian society is situated under the influence of internationally comparable processes, such as the influence

13 Éric Macé, *Les imaginaires médiatiques. Une sociologie postcritique des médias,* Éditions Amsterdam, 2006.

of the "global" media. Indeed, the most significant finding from this perspective represents the interpretation of the French riots of November 2005 established "independently" from the research by Russian nationalists in the form of the analyzed television report "Kondopoga - Russian Revolt." Though it seems clear that the social tensions, including the violence concerning so-called urban violence in France, are important from the perspective of radical nationalists in Russia. The actual situation is linked to a range of complex phenomenons such as the rise of immigration and nationalism, and the question of national identity. The entire debate around migration policy encourages the observations and interpretations of the European experience (such as the French one) by Russian citizens, including the most radical ones, who are directly involved in the process. These Russian nationalists in some sense think in European ways and think of their country as part of a struggle against an enemy common to Europe. Paradoxically, according to our data these young chauvinists think of Russia as a part of Europe and not as having its own "Eurasian" identity.

This "European way of thinking," from the interviewed subjects' point of view, also has another very important dimension to the survey done in Kondopoga. The case of the riots of September 2006 is very interesting from this point of view. On the one hand, the nationalist/racist riots, which either deteriorated or demolished local social cohesion, demonstrate the failure of the processes of democratization in Russia. On the other hand, these riots led to a real "explosion" of local civil society and official creations. Five associations (Kondopoga: Town of Young People, Our Home Kondopoga, Rock Club "Kondor," the "Faiz" Autonomous Organization of Uzbek Culture, the Youth Democratic Anti-Fascist Movement "*Nashi*" ["Ours!"]) and four official creations (the Department for Youth, Culture and Sport, the Youth Cultural Centre [built on the spot of a restaurant burned during the riots], the Council of Nongovernmental Organizations, the Centre for Social and Juridical Adaptation of Immigrants) have been founded. These local initiatives set up *a posteriori* illustrate that in the situation of local authorities' inability to guarantee the public security in the provincial part of Russia, the citizens can take responsibility in a democratic way for the social peace and order. The most active part of the population, including members of ethnic minorities, proved that they were not

crushed by the local collective violence and they demonstrated creative and democratic attitudes. These two faces of the riot, one destructive and other creative, in the sense of how it constituted a "test" for the local environment were expressed by Luda (56 years old, president of an NGO created after the acts of violence in Kondopoga): "I think that at first to apply a 'Western life-style' we must learn what it means to live in democracy. Western values are not only related to consumption. There is no democracy here. We have not yet learned how to like each other. So, what to say when it comes to migrants!"

SOVIET AND POST-SOVIET POLITICS AND SOCIETY

Edited by Dr. Andreas Umland

ISSN 1614-3515

1 *Андреас Умланд (ред.)*
Воплощение Европейской конвенции по правам человека в России
Философские, юридические и эмпирические исследования
ISBN 3-89821-387-0

2 *Christian Wipperfürth*
Russland – ein vertrauenswürdiger Partner?
Grundlagen, Hintergründe und Praxis gegenwärtiger russischer Außenpolitik
Mit einem Vorwort von Heinz Timmermann
ISBN 3-89821-401-X

3 *Manja Hussner*
Die Übernahme internationalen Rechts in die russische und deutsche Rechtsordnung
Eine vergleichende Analyse zur Völkerrechtsfreundlichkeit der Verfassungen der Russländischen Föderation und der Bundesrepublik Deutschland
Mit einem Vorwort von Rainer Arnold
ISBN 3-89821-438-9

4 *Matthew Tejada*
Bulgaria's Democratic Consolidation and the Kozloduy Nuclear Power Plant (KNPP)
The Unattainability of Closure
With a foreword by Richard J. Crampton
ISBN 3-89821-439-7

5 *Марк Григорьевич Меерович*
Квадратные метры, определяющие сознание
Государственная жилищная политика в СССР. 1921 – 1941 гг
ISBN 3-89821-474-5

6 *Andrei P. Tsygankov, Pavel A.Tsygankov (Eds.)*
New Directions in Russian International Studies
ISBN 3-89821-422-2

7 *Марк Григорьевич Меерович*
Как власть народ к труду приучала
Жилище в СССР – средство управления людьми. 1917 – 1941 гг.
С предисловием Елены Осокиной
ISBN 3-89821-495-8

8 *David J. Galbreath*
Nation-Building and Minority Politics in Post-Socialist States
Interests, Influence and Identities in Estonia and Latvia
With a foreword by David J. Smith
ISBN 3-89821-467-2

9 *Алексей Юрьевич Безугольный*
Народы Кавказа в Вооруженных силах СССР в годы Великой Отечественной войны 1941-1945 гг.
С предисловием Николая Бугая
ISBN 3-89821-475-3

10 *Вячеслав Лихачев и Владимир Прибыловский (ред.)*
Русское Национальное Единство, 1990-2000. В 2-х томах
ISBN 3-89821-523-7

11 *Николай Бугай (ред.)*
Народы стран Балтии в условиях сталинизма (1940-е – 1950-е годы)
Документированная история
ISBN 3-89821-525-3

12 *Ingmar Bredies (Hrsg.)*
Zur Anatomie der Orange Revolution in der Ukraine
Wechsel des Elitenregimes oder Triumph des Parlamentarismus?
ISBN 3-89821-524-5

13 *Anastasia V. Mitrofanova*
The Politicization of Russian Orthodoxy
Actors and Ideas
With a foreword by William C. Gay
ISBN 3-89821-481-8

14 *Nathan D. Larson*
Alexander Solzhenitsyn and the Russo-Jewish Question
ISBN 3-89821-483-4

15 *Guido Houben*
Kulturpolitik und Ethnizität
Staatliche Kunstförderung im Russland der neunziger Jahre
Mit einem Vorwort von Gert Weisskirchen
ISBN 3-89821-542-3

16 *Leonid Luks*
Der russische „Sonderweg“?
Aufsätze zur neuesten Geschichte Russlands im europäischen Kontext
ISBN 3-89821-496-6

17 *Евгений Мороз*
История «Мёртвой воды» – от страшной сказки к большой политике
Политическое неоязычество в постсоветской России
ISBN 3-89821-551-2

18 *Александр Верховский и Галина Кожевникова (ред.)*
Этническая и религиозная интолерантность в российских СМИ
Результаты мониторинга 2001-2004 гг.
ISBN 3-89821-569-5

19 *Christian Ganzer*
Sowjetisches Erbe und ukrainische Nation
Das Museum der Geschichte des Zaporoger Kosakentums auf der Insel Chortycja
Mit einem Vorwort von Frank Golczewski
ISBN 3-89821-504-0

20 *Эльза-Баир Гучинова*
Помнить нельзя забыть
Антропология депортационной травмы калмыков
С предисловием Кэролайн Хамфри
ISBN 3-89821-506-7

21 *Юлия Лидерман*
Мотивы «проверки» и «испытания» в постсоветской культуре
Советское прошлое в российском кинематографе 1990-х годов
С предисловием Евгения Марголита
ISBN 3-89821-511-3

22 *Tanya Lokshina, Ray Thomas, Mary Mayer (Eds.)*
The Imposition of a Fake Political Settlement in the Northern Caucasus
The 2003 Chechen Presidential Election
ISBN 3-89821-436-2

23 *Timothy McCajor Hall, Rosie Read (Eds.)*
Changes in the Heart of Europe
Recent Ethnographies of Czechs, Slovaks, Roma, and Sorbs
With an afterword by Zdeněk Salzmann
ISBN 3-89821-606-3

24 *Christian Autengruber*
Die politischen Parteien in Bulgarien und Rumänien
Eine vergleichende Analyse seit Beginn der 90er Jahre
Mit einem Vorwort von Dorothée de Nève
ISBN 3-89821-476-1

25 *Annette Freyberg-Inan with Radu Cristescu*
The Ghosts in Our Classrooms, or: John Dewey Meets Ceaușescu
The Promise and the Failures of Civic Education in Romania
ISBN 3-89821-416-8

26 *John B. Dunlop*
The 2002 Dubrovka and 2004 Beslan Hostage Crises
A Critique of Russian Counter-Terrorism
With a foreword by Donald N. Jensen
ISBN 3-89821-608-X

27 *Peter Koller*
Das touristische Potenzial von Kam’’janec’–Podil’s’kyj
Eine fremdenverkehrsgeographische Untersuchung der Zukunftsperspektiven und Maßnahmenplanung zur Destinationsentwicklung des „ukrainischen Rothenburg“
Mit einem Vorwort von Kristiane Klemm
ISBN 3-89821-640-3

28 *Françoise Daucé, Elisabeth Sieca-Kozlowski (Eds.)*
Dedovshchina in the Post-Soviet Military
Hazing of Russian Army Conscripts in a Comparative Perspective
With a foreword by Dale Herspring
ISBN 3-89821-616-0

29 *Florian Strasser*
Zivilgesellschaftliche Einflüsse auf die Orange Revolution
Die gewaltlose Massenbewegung und die ukrainische Wahlkrise 2004
Mit einem Vorwort von Egbert Jahn
ISBN 3-89821-648-9

30 *Rebecca S. Katz*
The Georgian Regime Crisis of 2003-2004
A Case Study in Post-Soviet Media Representation of Politics, Crime and Corruption
ISBN 3-89821-413-3

31 *Vladimir Kantor*
Willkür oder Freiheit
Beiträge zur russischen Geschichtsphilosophie
Ediert von Dagmar Herrmann sowie mit einem Vorwort versehen von Leonid Luks
ISBN 3-89821-589-X

32 *Laura A. Victoir*
The Russian Land Estate Today
A Case Study of Cultural Politics in Post-Soviet Russia
With a foreword by Priscilla Roosevelt
ISBN 3-89821-426-5

33 *Ivan Katchanovski*
Cleft Countries
Regional Political Divisions and Cultures in Post-Soviet Ukraine and Moldova
With a foreword by Francis Fukuyama
ISBN 3-89821-558-X

34 *Florian Mühlfried*
Postsowjetische Feiern
Das Georgische Bankett im Wandel
Mit einem Vorwort von Kevin Tuite
ISBN 3-89821-601-2

35 *Roger Griffin, Werner Loh, Andreas Umland (Eds.)*
Fascism Past and Present, West and East
An International Debate on Concepts and Cases in the Comparative Study of the Extreme Right
With an afterword by Walter Laqueur
ISBN 3-89821-674-8

36 *Sebastian Schlegel*
Der „Weiße Archipel“
Sowjetische Atomstädte 1945-1991
Mit einem Geleitwort von Thomas Bohn
ISBN 3-89821-679-9

37 *Vyacheslav Likhachev*
Political Anti-Semitism in Post-Soviet Russia
Actors and Ideas in 1991-2003
Edited and translated from Russian by Eugene Veklerov
ISBN 3-89821-529-6

38 *Josette Baer (Ed.)*
Preparing Liberty in Central Europe
Political Texts from the Spring of Nations 1848 to the Spring of Prague 1968
With a foreword by Zdeněk V. David
ISBN 3-89821-546-6

39 *Михаил Лукьянов*
Российский консерватизм и реформа, 1907-1914
С предисловием Марка Д. Стейнберга
ISBN 3-89821-503-2

40 *Nicola Melloni*
Market Without Economy
The 1998 Russian Financial Crisis
With a foreword by Eiji Furukawa
ISBN 3-89821-407-9

41 *Dmitrij Chmelnizki*
Die Architektur Stalins
Bd. 1: Studien zu Ideologie und Stil
Bd. 2: Bilddokumentation
Mit einem Vorwort von Bruno Flierl
ISBN 3-89821-515-6

42 *Katja Yafimava*
Post-Soviet Russian-Belarussian Relationships
The Role of Gas Transit Pipelines
With a foreword by Jonathan P. Stern
ISBN 3-89821-655-1

43 *Boris Chavkin*
Verflechtungen der deutschen und russischen Zeitgeschichte
Aufsätze und Archivfunde zu den Beziehungen Deutschlands und der Sowjetunion von 1917 bis 1991
Ediert von Markus Edlinger sowie mit einem Vorwort versehen von Leonid Luks
ISBN 3-89821-756-6

44 *Anastasija Grynenko in Zusammenarbeit mit Claudia Dathe*
Die Terminologie des Gerichtswesens der Ukraine und Deutschlands im Vergleich
Eine übersetzungswissenschaftliche Analyse juristischer Fachbegriffe im Deutschen, Ukrainischen und Russischen
Mit einem Vorwort von Ulrich Hartmann
ISBN 3-89821-691-8

45 *Anton Burkov*
The Impact of the European Convention on Human Rights on Russian Law
Legislation and Application in 1996-2006
With a foreword by Françoise Hampson
ISBN 978-3-89821-639-5

46 *Stina Torjesen, Indra Overland (Eds.)*
International Election Observers in Post-Soviet Azerbaijan
Geopolitical Pawns or Agents of Change?
ISBN 978-3-89821-743-9

47 *Taras Kuzio*
Ukraine – Crimea – Russia
Triangle of Conflict
ISBN 978-3-89821-761-3

48 *Claudia Šabić*
"Ich erinnere mich nicht, aber L'viv!"
Zur Funktion kultureller Faktoren für die Institutionalisierung und Entwicklung einer ukrainischen Region
Mit einem Vorwort von Melanie Tatur
ISBN 978-3-89821-752-1

49 *Marlies Bilz*
Tatarstan in der Transformation
Nationaler Diskurs und Politische Praxis 1988-1994
Mit einem Vorwort von Frank Golczewski
ISBN 978-3-89821-722-4

50 *Марлен Ларюэль (ред.)*
Современные интерпретации русского национализма
ISBN 978-3-89821-795-8

51 *Sonja Schüler*
Die ethnische Dimension der Armut
Roma im postsozialistischen Rumänien
Mit einem Vorwort von Anton Sterbling
ISBN 978-3-89821-776-7

52 *Галина Кожевникова*
Радикальный национализм в России и противодействие ему
Сборник докладов Центра «Сова» за 2004-2007 гг.
С предисловием Александра Верховского
ISBN 978-3-89821-721-7

53 *Галина Кожевникова и Владимир Прибыловский*
Российская власть в биографиях I
Высшие должностные лица РФ в 2004 г.
ISBN 978-3-89821-796-5

54 *Галина Кожевникова и Владимир Прибыловский*
Российская власть в биографиях II
Члены Правительства РФ в 2004 г.
ISBN 978-3-89821-797-2

55 *Галина Кожевникова и Владимир Прибыловский*
Российская власть в биографиях III
Руководители федеральных служб и агентств РФ в 2004 г.
ISBN 978-3-89821-798-9

56 *Ileana Petroniu*
Privatisierung in Transformationsökonomien
Determinanten der Restrukturierungs-Bereitschaft am Beispiel Polens, Rumäniens und der Ukraine
Mit einem Vorwort von Rainer W. Schäfer
ISBN 978-3-89821-790-3

57 *Christian Wipperfürth*
Russland und seine GUS-Nachbarn
Hintergründe, aktuelle Entwicklungen und Konflikte in einer ressourcenreichen Region
ISBN 978-3-89821-801-6

58 *Togzhan Kassenova*
From Antagonism to Partnership
The Uneasy Path of the U.S.-Russian Cooperative Threat Reduction
With a foreword by Christoph Bluth
ISBN 978-3-89821-707-1

59 *Alexander Höllwerth*
Das sakrale eurasische Imperium des Aleksandr Dugin
Eine Diskursanalyse zum postsowjetischen russischen Rechtsextremismus
Mit einem Vorwort von Dirk Uffelmann
ISBN 978-3-89821-813-9

60 *Олег Рябов*
«Россия-Матушка»
Национализм, гендер и война в России XX века
С предисловием Елены Гощило
ISBN 978-3-89821-487-2

61 *Ivan Maistrenko*
Borot'bism
A Chapter in the History of the Ukrainian Revolution
With a new introduction by Chris Ford
Translated by George S. N. Luckyj with the assistance of Ivan L. Rudnytsky
ISBN 978-3-89821-697-5

62 *Maryna Romanets*
Anamorphosic Texts and Reconfigured Visions
Improvised Traditions in Contemporary Ukrainian and Irish Literature
ISBN 978-3-89821-576-3

63 *Paul D'Anieri and Taras Kuzio (Eds.)*
Aspects of the Orange Revolution I
Democratization and Elections in Post-Communist Ukraine
ISBN 978-3-89821-698-2

64 *Bohdan Harasymiw in collaboration with Oleh S. Ilnytzkyj (Eds.)*
Aspects of the Orange Revolution II
Information and Manipulation Strategies in the 2004 Ukrainian Presidential Elections
ISBN 978-3-89821-699-9

65 *Ingmar Bredies, Andreas Umland and Valentin Yakushik (Eds.)*
Aspects of the Orange Revolution III
The Context and Dynamics of the 2004 Ukrainian Presidential Elections
ISBN 978-3-89821-803-0

66 *Ingmar Bredies, Andreas Umland and Valentin Yakushik (Eds.)*
Aspects of the Orange Revolution IV
Foreign Assistance and Civic Action in the 2004 Ukrainian Presidential Elections
ISBN 978-3-89821-808-5

67 *Ingmar Bredies, Andreas Umland and Valentin Yakushik (Eds.)*
Aspects of the Orange Revolution V
Institutional Observation Reports on the 2004 Ukrainian Presidential Elections
ISBN 978-3-89821-809-2

68 *Taras Kuzio (Ed.)*
Aspects of the Orange Revolution VI
Post-Communist Democratic Revolutions in Comparative Perspective
ISBN 978-3-89821-820-7

69 *Tim Bohse*
Autoritarismus statt Selbstverwaltung
Die Transformation der kommunalen Politik in der Stadt Kaliningrad 1990-2005
Mit einem Geleitwort von Stefan Troebst
ISBN 978-3-89821-782-8

70 *David Rupp*
Die Rußländische Föderation und die russischsprachige Minderheit in Lettland
Eine Fallstudie zur Anwaltspolitik Moskaus gegenüber den russophonen Minderheiten im „Nahen Ausland“ von 1991 bis 2002
Mit einem Vorwort von Helmut Wagner
ISBN 978-3-89821-778-1

71 *Taras Kuzio*
Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives on Nationalism
New Directions in Cross-Cultural and Post-Communist Studies
With a foreword by Paul Robert Magocsi
ISBN 978-3-89821-815-3

72 *Christine Teichmann*
Die Hochschultransformation im heutigen Osteuropa
Kontinuität und Wandel bei der Entwicklung des postkommunistischen Universitätswesens
Mit einem Vorwort von Oskar Anweiler
ISBN 978-3-89821-842-9

73 *Julia Kusznir*
Der politische Einfluss von Wirtschaftseliten in russischen Regionen
Eine Analyse am Beispiel der Erdöl- und Erdgasindustrie, 1992-2005
Mit einem Vorwort von Wolfgang Eichwede
ISBN 978-3-89821-821-4

74 *Alena Vysotskaya*
Russland, Belarus und die EU-Osterweiterung
Zur Minderheitenfrage und zum Problem der Freizügigkeit des Personenverkehrs
Mit einem Vorwort von Katlijn Malfliet
ISBN 978-3-89821-822-1

75 *Heiko Pleines (Hrsg.)*
Corporate Governance in post-sozialistischen Volkswirtschaften
ISBN 978-3-89821-766-8

76 *Stefan Ihrig*
Wer sind die Moldawier?
Rumänismus versus Moldowanismus in Historiographie und Schulbüchern der Republik Moldova, 1991-2006
Mit einem Vorwort von Holm Sundhaussen
ISBN 978-3-89821-466-7

77 *Galina Kozhevnikova in collaboration with Alexander Verkhovsky and Eugene Veklerov*
Ultra-Nationalism and Hate Crimes in Contemporary Russia
The 2004-2006 Annual Reports of Moscow's SOVA Center
With a foreword by Stephen D. Shenfield
ISBN 978-3-89821-868-9

78 *Florian Küchler*
The Role of the European Union in Moldova's Transnistria Conflict
With a foreword by Christopher Hill
ISBN 978-3-89821-850-4

79 *Bernd Rechel*
The Long Way Back to Europe
Minority Protection in Bulgaria
With a foreword by Richard Crampton
ISBN 978-3-89821-863-4

80 *Peter W. Rodgers*
Nation, Region and History in Post-Communist Transitions
Identity Politics in Ukraine, 1991-2006
With a foreword by Vera Tolz
ISBN 978-3-89821-903-7

81 *Stephanie Solywoda*
The Life and Work of Semen L. Frank
A Study of Russian Religious Philosophy
With a foreword by Philip Walters
ISBN 978-3-89821-457-5

82 *Vera Sokolova*
Cultural Politics of Ethnicity
Discourses on Roma in Communist Czechoslovakia
ISBN 978-3-89821-864-1

83 *Natalya Shevchik Ketenci*
Kazakhstani Enterprises in Transition
The Role of Historical Regional Development in Kazakhstan's Post-Soviet Economic Transformation
ISBN 978-3-89821-831-3

84 *Martin Malek, Anna Schor-Tschudnowskaja (Hrsg.)*
Europa im Tschetschenienkrieg
Zwischen politischer Ohnmacht und Gleichgültigkeit
Mit einem Vorwort von Lipchan Basajewa
ISBN 978-3-89821-676-0

85 *Stefan Meister*
Das postsowjetische Universitätswesen zwischen nationalem und internationalem Wandel
Die Entwicklung der regionalen Hochschule in Russland als Gradmesser der Systemtransformation
Mit einem Vorwort von Joan DeBardeleben
ISBN 978-3-89821-891-7

86 *Konstantin Sheiko in collaboration with Stephen Brown*
Nationalist Imaginings of the Russian Past
Anatolii Fomenko and the Rise of Alternative History in Post-Communist Russia
With a foreword by Donald Ostrowski
ISBN 978-3-89821-915-0

87 *Sabine Jenni*
Wie stark ist das „Einige Russland"?
Zur Parteibindung der Eliten und zum Wahlerfolg der Machtpartei im Dezember 2007
Mit einem Vorwort von Klaus Armingeon
ISBN 978-3-89821-961-7

88 *Thomas Borén*
Meeting-Places of Transformation
Urban Identity, Spatial Representations and Local Politics in Post-Soviet St Petersburg
ISBN 978-3-89821-739-2

89 *Aygul Ashirova*
Stalinismus und Stalin-Kult in Zentralasien
Turkmenistan 1924-1953
Mit einem Vorwort von Leonid Luks
ISBN 978-3-89821-987-7

90 *Leonid Luks*
Freiheit oder imperiale Größe?
Essays zu einem russischen Dilemma
ISBN 978-3-8382-0011-8

91 *Christopher Gilley*
The ‘Change of Signposts’ in the Ukrainian Emigration
A Contribution to the History of Sovietophilism in the 1920s
With a foreword by Frank Golczewski
ISBN 978-3-89821-965-5

92 *Philipp Casula, Jeronim Perovic (Eds.)*
Identities and Politics During the Putin Presidency
The Discursive Foundations of Russia's Stability
With a foreword by Heiko Haumann
ISBN 978-3-8382-0015-6

93 *Marcel Viëtor*
Europa und die Frage nach seinen Grenzen im Osten
Zur Konstruktion ‚europäischer Identität’ in Geschichte und Gegenwart
Mit einem Vorwort von Albrecht Lehmann
ISBN 978-3-8382-0045-3

94 *Ben Hellman, Andrei Rogachevskii*
Filming the Unfilmable
Casper Wrede's 'One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich'
ISBN 978-3-8382-0044-6

95 *Eva Fuchslocher*
Vaterland, Sprache, Glaube
Orthodoxie und Nationenbildung am Beispiel Georgiens
Mit einem Vorwort von Christina von Braun
ISBN 978-3-89821-884-9

96 *Vladimir Kantor*
Das Westlertum und der Weg Russlands
Zur Entwicklung der russischen Literatur und Philosophie
Ediert von Dagmar Herrmann
Mit einem Beitrag von Nikolaus Lobkowicz
ISBN 978-3-8382-0102-3

97 *Kamran Musayev*
Die postsowjetische Transformation im Baltikum und Südkaukasus
Eine vergleichende Untersuchung der politischen Entwicklung Lettlands und Aserbaidschans 1985-2009
Mit einem Vorwort von Leonid Luks
Ediert von Sandro Henschel
ISBN 978-3-8382-0103-0

98 *Tatiana Zhurzhenko*
Borderlands into Bordered Lands
Geopolitics of Identity in Post-Soviet Ukraine
With a foreword by Dieter Segert
ISBN 978-3-8382-0042-2

99 *Кирилл Галушко, Лидия Смола (ред.)*
Пределы падения – варианты украинского будущего
Аналитико-прогностические исследования
ISBN 978-3-8382-0148-1

100 *Michael Minkenberg (ed.)*
Historical Legacies and the Radical Right in Post-Cold War Central and Eastern Europe
With an afterword by Sabrina P. Ramet
ISBN 978-3-8382-0124-5

101 *David-Emil Wickström*
“Okna otkroi!” – “Open the Windows!”
Transcultural Flows and Identity Politics in the St. Petersburg Popular Music Scene
With a foreword by Yngvar B. Steinholt
ISBN 978-3-8382-0100-9

102 *Eva Zabka*
Eine neue „Zeit der Wirren“?
Der spät- und postsowjetische Systemwandel 1985-2000 im Spiegel russischer gesellschaftspolitischer Diskurse
Mit einem Vorwort von Margareta Mommsen
ISBN 978-3-8382-0161-0

103 *Ulrike Ziemer*
Ethnic Belonging, Gender and Cultural Practices
Youth Identitites in Contemporary Russia
With a foreword by Anoop Nayak
ISBN 978-3-8382-0152-8

104 *Ksenia Chepikova*
‚Einiges Russland' - eine zweite KPdSU?
Aspekte der Identitätskonstruktion einer postsowjetischen „Partei der Macht"
Mit einem Vorwort von Torsten Oppelland
ISBN 978-3-8382-0311-9

105 *Леонид Люкс*
Западничество или евразийство? Демократия или идеократия?
Сборник статей об исторических дилеммах России
С предисловием Владимира Кантора
ISBN 978-3-8382-0211-2

106 *Anna Dost*
Das russische Verfassungsrecht auf dem Weg zum Föderalismus und zurück
Zum Konflikt von Rechtsnormen und -wirklichkeit in der Russländischen Föderation von 1991 bis 2009
Mit einem Vorwort von Alexander Blankenagel
ISBN 978-3-8382-0292-1

107 *Philipp Herzog*
Sozialistische Völkerfreundschaft, nationaler Widerstand oder harmloser Zeitvertreib?
Zur politischen Funktion der Volkskunst im sowjetischen Estland
Mit einem Vorwort von Andreas Kappeler
ISBN 978-3-8382-0216-7

108 *Marlène Laruelle (ed.)*
Russian Nationalism, Foreign Policy, and Identity Debates in Putin's Russia
New Ideological Patterns after the Orange Revolution
ISBN 978-3-8382-0325-6

109 *Michail Logvinov*
Russlands Kampf gegen den internationalen Terrorismus
Eine kritische Bestandsaufnahme des Bekämpfungsansatzes
Mit einem Geleitwort von Hans-Henning Schröder
und einem Vorwort von Eckhard Jesse
ISBN 978-3-8382-0329-4

110 *John B. Dunlop*
The Moscow Bombings of September 1999
Examinations of Russian Terrorist Attacks at the Onset of Vladimir Putin's Rule
ISBN 978-3-8382-0388-1

111 *Андрей А. Ковалёв*
Свидетельство из-за кулис российской политики I
Можно ли делать добро из зла? (Воспоминания и размышления о последних советских и первых послесоветских годах)
With a foreword by Peter Reddaway
ISBN 978-3-8382-0302-7

112 *Андрей А. Ковалёв*
Свидетельство из-за кулис российской политики II
Угроза для себя и окружающих (Наблюдения и предостережения относительно происходящего после 2000 г.)
ISBN 978-3-8382-0303-4

113 *Bernd Kappenberg*
Zeichen setzen für Europa
Der Gebrauch europäischer lateinischer Sonderzeichen in der deutschen Öffentlichkeit
Mit einem Vorwort von Peter Schlobinski
ISBN 978-3-89821-749-1

114 *Ivo Mijnssen*
The Quest for an Ideal Youth in Putin's Russia I
Back to Our Future! History, Modernity and Patriotism according to *Nashi*, 2005-2012
With a foreword by Jeronim Perović
ISBN 978-3-8382-0368-3

115 *Jussi Lassila*
The Quest for an Ideal Youth in Putin's Russia II
The Search for Distinctive Conformism in the Political Communication of *Nashi*, 2005-2009
With a foreword by Kirill Postoutenko
ISBN 978-3-8382-0415-4

116 *Valerio Trabandt*
Neue Nachbarn, gute Nachbarschaft?
Die EU als internationaler Akteur am Beispiel ihrer Demokratieförderung in Belarus und der Ukraine 2004-2009
Mit einem Vorwort von Jutta Joachim
ISBN 978-3-8382-0437-6

117 *Fabian Pfeiffer*
Estlands Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik I
Der estnische Atlantizismus nach der wiedererlangten Unabhängigkeit 1991-2004
Mit einem Vorwort von Helmut Hubel
ISBN 978-3-8382-0127-6

118 *Jana Podßuweit*
Estlands Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik II
Handlungsoptionen eines Kleinstaates im Rahmen seiner EU-Mitgliedschaft (2004-2008)
Mit einem Vorwort von Helmut Hubel
ISBN 978-3-8382-0440-6

119 *Karin Pointner*
Estlands Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik III
Eine gedächtnispolitische Analyse estnischer Entwicklungskooperation 2006-2010
Mit einem Vorwort von Karin Liebhart
ISBN 978-3-8382-0435-2

120 *Ruslana Vovk*
Die Offenheit der ukrainischen Verfassung für das Völkerrecht und die europäische Integration
Mit einem Vorwort von Alexander Blankenagel
ISBN 978-3-8382-0481-9

121 *Mykhaylo Banakh*
Die Relevanz der Zivilgesellschaft bei den postkommunistischen Transformationsprozessen in mittel- und osteuropäischen Ländern
Das Beispiel der spät- und postsowjetischen Ukraine 1986-2009
Mit einem Vorwort von Gerhard Simon
ISBN 978-3-8382-0499-4

122 *Michael Moser*
Language Policy and the Discourse on Languages in Ukraine under President Viktor Yanukovych (25 February 2010–28 October 2012)
ISBN 978-3-8382-0497-0 (Paperback edition)
ISBN 978-3-8382-0507-6 (Hardcover edition)

ibidem-Verlag / ***ibidem*** Press
Melchiorstr. 15
70439 Stuttgart
Germany

ibidem@ibidem.eu
www.ibidem-verlag.com
www.ibidem.eu